

St. Gregory's Catholic High School

Cromwell Avenue, Westbrook, Warrington, Cheshire, WA5 1HG.
Telephone: 01925 574888



Head teacher

Mr E McGlinchey BSc (Hons) NPQH & NPQEL

Our ref: EM/SH

21st August 2024

Dear Parent / Carer,

Pastoral Team Letter for the start of the 2024/25 academic year

I hope you and your families are having a good summer break and that you are enjoying some down time. I write to you as promised in my headteacher's end of term letter dated 15th July 2024 to provide some general school information as well as key pastoral and safeguarding points as we approach the start of the new year.

A new year provides a fresh start following a good rest and it allows every pupil to build on their successes from the year before. In the case of our new Year 7, it offers us the chance of a completely new chapter. For any of our pupils wishing to improve on something from last year, the opportunity is now here.

Ofsted Report update

St Gregory's was inspected on the 3rd and 4th July by Ofsted, just before we finished the school term. This only left 11 working days before the end of the school year and therefore Ofsted have not sent the school a draft report yet as it normally takes a few weeks to be quality assured. As soon as I received the finished report. I will forward this to all parents immediately. I estimate that this should be around mid to late September.

Facilities update: Our pupils will be pleased that over the summer, following pupil voice, we have updated our toilet areas, new ICT rooms, new IT equipment, decorated classrooms and improved pupil consultation areas. We will also have an updated pupil circulation system in school supported by clear signage.

Reminder about term dates for 2024/25

School will reopen for all pupils on **Wednesday 4th September 2024 with staggered start times for some year groups.**

Our new **Year 7 will come into school before any other year group and their day starts at the new normal start time of 8.30am.** Year 7 can arrive at school anytime from 8.10am where staff will be welcoming them.

Years 8, 9, 10 and 11 will also start the term on the 4th September **but not until 11.30am**, however, they can arrive to school from 11.05am onwards and must go directly to the back yard where they will wait to be registered in form groups. Years 8, 9, 10 and 11 should not arrive at the school before 11.05am as there will be no staff available to greet or supervise them.

All term dates for the school can be found via this link: <https://www.stgregoryshigh.com/parents/term-dates>

School Day Timings: Please remember that our school day starts at the new time of **8.30am** from the 4th September 2024. All pupils should be in the school gates by this time in order not to be marked late to school. The full new school day timings are on the end of term letter dated 15th July 2024 and will also be added to the school website soon.

Early school closure for Open Evening: On Thursday 19th September, all pupils will finish school at the earlier time of 12.20 (after completing periods 1, 2 and 3) so that the school can close and prepare for our Open Evening. The bus companies will be notified.

Support for pupils: St Gregory's has two fully trained mental health support staff (Mrs O'Kane and Mrs Garcia) as well as the school Chaplain (Mrs Whitlow). We also have many specialist pastoral and support staff who will support children with a range of issues and we have new facilities such as consultation rooms

in which to meet with pupils who are experiencing difficulties. These services are regularly promoted in school, but if you feel your child would benefit from additional support, please get in contact with the school via your child's pupil progress manager.

Medical Room: We have a dedicated medical room in school for children who require medications and planned care needs. However, we have seen an increase in pupils requesting to leave lessons to attend the medical room for minor reasons. The medical room will not be staffed during lesson time and will only be staffed for pupils who have pre-arranged medical needs. If a child feels unwell, they will speak with their Pastoral Support Manager who will decide any next steps or request first aid support.

Attendance and Punctuality: We are very pleased with the attendance and punctuality of the vast majority of our pupils; they are keen to be in school learning.

St Gregory's is proud to have the best attendance record in Warrington, and we credit our parent partnership as key reason behind this, but we are keen to ensure that these standards apply to all pupils. There is no doubting the negative impact of missing time in school in terms of resilience and exam performance. We must remind all parents and carers that it is a legal obligation that pupils attend school regularly. In order for pupils to make the progress they are capable of, it is vital that pupils attend school to prevent them from missing lessons, falling behind in content and ultimately not reaching their potential. Good attendance also promotes good habits.

At St Gregory's we set a minimum target of 97% attendance. Pupils with attendance below 90% are classed as persistent absentees and studies show that their progress is significantly impacted. In addition to this, punctuality is a vital life skill and good habits form from an early age. Pupils who arrive late to school are missing Collective Worship, form time and notices and many other learning opportunities as we have an extensive form time programme in place. Please do ensure that your child leaves home with sufficient time to arrive at school no later than 8.30am. As you will be aware from previous communication, pupils who arrive to school late will be placed on a 'late' detention on the same day

Uniform: Our uniform policy is on our school website and as always, we ask that pupils follow the school's policy fully.

Pupils should wear school shoes and not trainers or boots. Please ensure when buying shoes for your child's return to school in September that they are in line with our uniform policy. Any pupil who arrives to school wearing trainers will be given a pair of school shoes to wear for the day.

Pupils can wear the school jumper if they are cold; no other jumper/hoody is allowed. When inside, pupils should not wear coats / jackets / hoody's. Unfortunately, due to restrictions with space in the school corridors, we only have locker space for Year 7. We review this issue every year but we cannot add additional lockers into the school for health and safety reasons.

False nails and eyelashes are not permitted; neither is make-up – please do not allow your child to have false nails/eyelashes put on during term time.

We appreciate that during the summer, some of our pupils may decide to get different haircuts, piercings and have nail enhancements etc. With only two weeks to go until the start of the new term from today, we advise that any other plans that pupils may have for nails or haircuts should factor in ensuring that these are compliant with our uniform requirements by the first day of term to avoid any issues that undermine a positive start.

We understand that most pupils will have become accustomed to having their phones with them at all times during the holidays; however, when in school pupils are not allowed to use their phones or ear pods during the school day at all. If a child is seen using these items, then they will be confiscated and kept in the safe overnight as per our devices policy which can be found on our website.

Communication with school: Communication between parents and the school is vital and there are many communication channels available to parents. Please do be mindful that during the school day, it can be very difficult for staff to get back to parents for non-emergency matters due to teaching commitments and other duties. We do have a Parent Communication Protocol and Parent Code of

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Conduct that we ask all parents to read and be aware of when it comes to communication with school staff.

Pupil Progress Managers for 2024/25

There may be occasions when you need to contact your child's Pupil Progress Manager (**PPM**) or Pastoral Support Manager (**PSM**) about various matters. These staff members will do their very best to get back to you as soon as possible but please be mindful that the Pupil Progress Managers also teach and are not always immediately available.

Year Group	Pupil Progress Manager & Pastoral Support Manager	Contact email address
Year 7	Mrs Brown (formerly Miss Craig) Miss Dolphin	abrown@stgregoryshigh.com jdolphin@stgregoryshigh.com
Year 8	Mr Getty Ms Heaton	mgetty@stgregoryshigh.com nheaton@stgregoryshigh.com
Year 9	Mr Wiles Miss Evans	rwiles@stgregoryshigh.com eevans@stgregoryshigh.com
Year 10	Mr Parry Mrs Batty	mparry@stgregoryshigh.com dbatty@stgregoryshigh.com
Year 11	Mrs Burns Mrs Lee	aburns@stgregoryshigh.com jlee@stgregoryshigh.com

SEND Team contact details

Our SENDCo is Ms Salisbury who can be contacted on rsalisbury@stgregoryshigh.com and the deputy SENDCo is Mrs Granton who can be contacted on lgranton@stgregoryshigh.com.

Safeguarding at St Gregory's

I have made some staffing changes for the 2024/25 academic year and one of these is that Miss Lavin will now be the 'Designated Safeguarding Lead'. St Gregory's takes great pride in our safeguarding culture, one which involves all staff members and our parent and carers but we have a specific team that lead on day to day safeguarding matters in school. This team will consist of Miss Lavin, Mr MacKenzie, Mrs Batty and Mr Funnell. The safeguarding team will be supported by multiple other members of staff in school. Please see below for an introduction from Miss Lavin.

"Having worked at St Gregory's for several years now, I am very much looking forward to working with our pupils and families within my new role.

Pastoral care and safeguarding has always been of the highest priority at St Gregory's and I am totally committed to continuing this close partnership with you in the future to help our pupils develop into well-rounded, reflective, caring and thoughtful young people, ready to take their place in society.

I look forward to working with you, Miss Lavin"

I hope that this letter has provided you with the additional information you need ahead of the return to school and I wish you all an enjoyable remaining period for the end of the summer holidays. Everyone at St Gregory's is very much looking forward to welcoming you and your children back to school on Wednesday 4th September.

Yours Sincerely,

Ed McGlinchey & The St Gregory's Pastoral Team