



Date: Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> September 2025

Our ref: ELO/sjt

Dear Parent/Carer,

**Re: Welcome to the new Academic Year**

A warm welcome to the new Academic Year and I hope you had a fantastic summer. I am writing to welcome our new Year 12 parents to the St Bernard's Sixth Form family and to say welcome back to the Year 13 parents. I am really looking forward to supporting your child in their sixth form journey and helping them get to the destination that is right for them.

I have created a Sixth Form student handbook which lays out my expectations for the students and there have been some changes in expectations to help improve student learning. We now have a dedicated Sixth Form study centre where students will complete silent study, and we are enforcing a no phones rule in this area. Students will be allowed to use their phones in the common room only. Students can bring in laptops or iPad and we have installed computers into the study centre which is situated at the top of main school with my office next door.

We have introduced Enrichment onto the Sixth Form timetable to support students in how to learn effectively at Sixth Form, give them dedicated time to complete their UCAS applications, engage in a full PSHE and Citizenship programme and we are arranging a speaker half term to invite guests to speak to the students about a range of topics. Students will also have one fitness session every fortnight. We are keen to develop and support the enrichment of the whole child as they enter adulthood.

The Sixth Form is an exciting time for students, but it is fast paced, and students need to be organised and engaged to take advantage of all the opportunities that are on offer. Students will be supported to engage in the many leadership opportunities available to them to help encourage and work with the younger year groups and support the school's Catholic Ethos and values of Respect, Justice and Service. They will be supported as they choose what their next steps are, whether this is to university or into employment with the help of the Sixth Form team and our fantastic careers lead.

We expect our students to set the example for younger years and expect their behaviour to always be exemplary within lessons, within the Sixth Form areas and across the whole school. Students will be held to account by our staged behaviour process – this is all laid out in the student handbook. Attendance and punctuality are critical to be successful at A level as being in front of their teachers is their best resource. All new Year 12 students are on probation until the first half term holiday. This was clearly shared with students on the first day and any behaviour or attitude to learning which does not meet our expectations will result in students being placed on further monitoring. You will be asked to come into school for a meeting to discuss the concerns and what the next steps will be for your child at the school.

We have high academic expectations of our students including the effective use of their study periods and time outside of lessons. We are continuing with our expectation that departments set students at least five hours of academic study outside of their taught curriculum, it is critical that students use their study periods, free periods and time outside of lessons effectively to manage this workload. Please encourage students and check in with them to ask about the work they are doing. All homework is set on Teams and students are encouraged to use a diary and will be supported to map out their week to keep a track of their lessons, extra reading and revision.

Please do ensure that your child is wearing the correct uniform in Sixth Form, no nose piercings or excessive jewellery, no chewing gum around the academy and whilst they can wear make-up this should be natural looking. Students should not have excessively long manicured nails, they should be a natural length and style.

I hope you can attend our KS5 information evening on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> September where I will walk through everything in detail and I hope to meet many of you in person. (More details of this to follow)

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'EO', with a horizontal line underneath.

Mrs E Owen

**Assistant Headteacher – Head of Sixth Form**