

St. Bernard's High School

A CATHOLIC ACADEMY FOR ARTS AND SCIENCE



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Head Teacher: Mrs A Moise-Dixon BA (Hons), PGCE

AMD / zmb

26 August 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

Firstly, I would like to take the opportunity to welcome you to a new academic year at St Bernard's High School. I hope that you were able to spend some part of the summer holidays with family and friends.

Last term Mrs James, Chair of Governors and subsequently Mr Sharpe, previous Headteacher confirmed my appointment and I have had limited communication to parents to this point. Therefore, I wanted to take this opportunity to introduce myself and to share with you as early as possible some of my personal values, expectations and vision which will underpin the way in which the academy continues to move forward.

Personal values

I am passionate about education and its ability to make a difference in the lives of our young people. I have worked in education for over twenty years and so to an extent, I have never left school! My own educational provision was varied when I went to school in East London in the 1980s and 1990s, however, there were amazing teachers who inspired me to want to achieve more than I had thought possible. I have worked in both Catholic and non-Catholic schools but always feel privileged to have the opportunity to combine both my faith and my vocation. It is my personal experience and faith which has shaped my commitment to my professional path. Prior to taking up my post at St Bernard's, I had been Principal and CEO of an all through Academy in Ealing, a Headteacher of a Catholic secondary school in North East London and Chief Accounting Officer of a two school Catholic MAT which included a primary school.

I believe that all young people, regardless of race, gender, class, ability, background or any other protected characteristic should have access to an excellent holistic Catholic education that inspires, motivates and develops young people to be the best version of themselves. I am ambitious for every young person who enters the academy. I am committed to ensuring that their time at St Bernard's will be fondly remembered and will prepare them for life when they leave the academy, supporting them to have and to make positive choices in their lives.

I believe in a well ordered, disciplined learning environment which insists upon high expectations, excellent attendance and punctuality, excellent behaviour for learning and excellent levels of teaching and learning to produce happy, confident and successful learners who respect and understand the importance of community.

Expectations

Positive behaviour for learning from students is vital. Having visited the academy a few times over the last term, I know that this is a predominant feature of the behaviour of students at St Bernard's. It is this mature behaviour and positive attitude towards learning which is reflected in the outstanding outcomes for students. However, we are never complacent. The challenges of the pandemic have had an impact on all learners across the country and indeed the world. Here at St Bernard's we will be working hard to support all of our students to return to pre-Covid routines as soon as possible.

Of course, we will always continue to work with parents/carers closely and your continued support is invaluable. You will know your child better than anyone and therefore, I would strongly encourage all parents to remind students of the following basic expectations:

- All students should arrive to the academy on time and in full academy uniform
- All students should arrive at the academy ready to learn with the correct equipment for each lesson on any given day
- All students should remember and display conduct and behaviour governed, ordered, guided and rooted in our Gospel values and in line with the teaching of Jesus Christ 'To love one another as I have loved you'
- All students must adhere to the one-way system in force
- All students should follow the instructions of any adult
- All students should work to the best of their ability in all lessons and ask for help if needed
- All students should be polite and courteous to all within the academy community including those who visit us at the academy

As we are working with young people, we know that there will be times when things do not go to plan and we have an excellent pastoral system to support students on these occasions. Again, we rely on our relationships with parents to contact us if anything is happening with your child that may affect their behaviour and attitude to learning so that we can proactively support. However, every student should understand that they are expected to behave well and that this is a basic expectation if they expect to achieve well. Self-discipline is a life skill.

Vision

As Headteacher, I want to continue to drive the Academy towards outstanding so that our students have a dynamic, broad and balanced curriculum which prepares them for life both professionally and spiritually. The academy had a very successful Ofsted inspection in October 2016 where inspectors confirmed that St Bernard's continued to be 'a good school.' I am committed to continuing the improvement journey on which the academy has been towards 'outstanding.' As a result, I will act swiftly on areas for improvement as I want the hard work of students, families and staff to be recognised and rewarded.

I would also welcome a greater level of involvement from parents. As the first teachers of your children, your knowledge is invaluable and research overwhelmingly shows that positive parental involvement has a significant impact and influence on how well students do at school. Fortunately, we have some information evenings coming up in the next couple of weeks, so I look forward to meeting many of you then. I believe you have already been sent a letter to 'save the date' and this letter is on our website. More information will follow shortly. As a parent myself and aunty and great aunt to fifteen, I know how both complex and rewarding parenting can be!

I am very excited about working with the whole academy community in the pursuit of excellence and seeing our children and young people excel and achieve their dreams. It will only be reached with hard work, focus and commitment but I, the governors and the staff at St Bernard's have the energy, passion and drive to make it happen and hope you will join us on the journey.

With warm regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Moise-Dixon', written in a cursive style.

Mrs A. Moise-Dixon
Headteacher