



# St John Fisher Catholic High School

## EDUCATING FOR LIFE

Hookstone Drive, Harrogate, HG2 8PT

Head Teacher: Mr S Mort B.A. (Hons), NPQH

Telephone: (01423) 887254 Website: [www.sjfchs.org.uk](http://www.sjfchs.org.uk) Email: [office@sjfchs.org.uk](mailto:office@sjfchs.org.uk)

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16<sup>th</sup> December 2020

### Dear Parents and Carers,

As we enter the last week of term staff and students continue to work hard in lessons and the strong focus on learning continues. Students in Year 11 and 13 have recently sat their mock examinations, and Heads of Departments are ensuring that the curriculum recovery plan is being implemented in all subjects (and year groups) to mitigate for the loss of learning arising from the national closure of schools.

### Catholic Life

During the last half-term, Year 7 students have participated in form group retreat days which have been led by our Lay Chaplain, Mr Atkin. During the retreat, students explored different ways of praying, and celebrated a socially distanced Mass with our new school Chaplain Fr Elliott.

Regrettably, due to Covid-19 restrictions, our school community cannot celebrate our annual 'Carols by Candlelight' service in the school Chapel this year. However, I am pleased to inform you that we will be broadcasting a remote service via the school Facebook page on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> December. Further details will follow on the Facebook page shortly.

### Goodbye and Best Wishes for a long and happy retirement to Mr Beetles

Our Assistant Headteacher, Mr Nigel Beetles, will be retiring at the end of this term after a teaching career which has spanned 36 years and one term.

Mr Beetles joined St. John Fisher in September 2002 as Head of Performing Arts and was promoted to Assistant Headteacher later that year. He led on the specialist school designation bid, resulting in St John Fisher becoming the first school in North Yorkshire to gain Performing Arts status. As a senior leader Mr Beetles has led on Catholic Life, community cohesion, teacher training, the Y TSA and the Sixth Form. He has also supported colleagues in other schools on a wide range of school improvement strategies.

Mr Beetles' passion, commitment and dedication to the students, staff and our wider school community has always been at the heart of his decision making and approach to the variety of roles which he has undertaken – we will miss him enormously!

### Executive Leadership Team

Following the recent appointments of Mrs Luke, Deputy Headteacher, and myself, the Governing Body have further strengthened the leadership capacity at the school for January 2021.





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Mr Sharpe is currently a senior leader at St John Fisher, and will be taking up the new executive leadership post of Director of Sixth Form. He will have responsibility for the overall strategic vision, direction, and operational aspects of the Sixth Form provision at St John Fisher.

Our new Deputy Headteacher, Mr Flanagan, will be joining us in January 2021. Mr Flanagan has undertaken a wide range of leadership roles, both in Catholic and state secondary schools. He is currently Deputy Headteacher at All Saints RC School, York. We look forward to welcoming Mr Flanagan to our school community.

This completes the Executive Leadership Team restructure.

### End of Term Arrangements

You may be aware of the government's announcement last week allowing schools to close to students on Friday 18th December. However, please note that we will remain open as planned on that date.

As in previous years, students in Years 7-11 may wear a Christmas jumper in place of their blazer in exchange for a donation of £2 which can be made via parentpay. Contributions will be made to Save the Children and our Catholic charity, Cafod. Please note, students must adhere to the normal uniform expectations in all other respects, including those who have PE lessons on Friday.

Sixth Form students will be dismissed at 12.30pm on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December.

Students in Years 7 -11, except for those who use school transport, will be dismissed at the following times:

- 1.40pm – Year 11
- 1.45pm – Year 10
- 1.50pm – Year 9
- 1.55pm – Years 7 and 8

Students who use school transport will be dismissed at 2 pm





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### Reporting Covid-19 positive cases after the school closes for Christmas

If your child receives a positive result before midnight on **Sunday 20th December**, you must inform the school via [covid@sjfchs.org](mailto:covid@sjfchs.org). Please include the name of your child, their tutor group, and the date that their symptoms started. Should your child receive a positive test result from **Monday 21st December** onwards then there is no need to contact the school. Please follow contact tracing instructions provided by NHS Test and Trace.

We have a Training Day on Monday 4 January. **Students return to school on Tuesday 5 January 2021.**

At the end of what has been an unprecedented and challenging term for everyone in our school community, I would like to commend our excellent students. The way they have responded to the new measures we have in place and dealt with the return to school after a long period of missed education, has been outstanding.

I am sure you will also join me in thanking our excellent teaching and support staff for their commitment and dedication to our young people during this time.

Thank you again for your ongoing support, understanding and patience.  
I wish you all a happy, peaceful, and holy Christmas.

Yours sincerely

Mr S Mort  
Headteacher

