



ST GEORGE'S SCHOOL

Parent Bulletin

7th January 2022

Information

Dear Parents

Firstly can we offer our heartfelt thanks to Mr Cullis and his team of volunteer testers, and to you as parents and students for complying with our request to test before term starts - including those who, for whatever reason, had to test at home. We picked up single figure number of cases out of well over 1000 tests (though in part this was because some people have failed a home LFT and thus knew not even to come in to be done in school).

The students have also been excellent at living with having to mask for much of their time indoors. Our mantra at the moment is that "it's normal St George's just with masks on" so exams, chapels (inc Sunday), house assemblies, and all extra curricular activities are still happening. Attached to this bulletin is the latest schedule for the weekly extra curricular round.

Missed Mocks...

With the ongoing pandemic, it is understandable that a number of students in 11 and 13 have already missed or will be absent from one or more of their mock exams. Clearly this is not ideal given the outside chance we need to repeat last years' Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs). Please note that it remains the clear intention of the government that exams will go ahead this year!

Returning to first principles for a second... Why are mocks important?

- they provide much needed experience and practice of formal conditions
- they initiate and help hone revision techniques
- they yield highly valuable feedback and targets for improvement

...and yes, as we discovered, they can be used to inform grading in a pandemic.

If your Year 11 missed an exam(s)... the relevant subject leaders will weigh-up the pros and cons, on a case-by-case basis, of them completing the paper... It is highly unlikely that any mocks completed now will be permissible for TAGs (if TAGs happen at all). In this event, we are confident that allowance would be made for alternative evidence (as it was in 2021).

As per the previously issued advice, Year 13 students who are unable to attend examinations due to illness or isolation should contact the Exams Office on 01582 716242 or 01582 716272, leaving a voicemail if necessary... we will want to know

- who you are, obv's! [*sic*]
- which exam or exams you will miss
- when you believe your isolation will end (if applicable)

We will try to reschedule missed exams into a later slot. When this is not possible, 'catch-up' will be organised by, and at the discretion of, the subject leader. As with Year 11, it is unlikely that papers



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sat under the individual arrangements will be valid as evidence but this should not detract from the benefits listed above!

Reporting and Parents' Evenings

The eagle-eyed and hyper-organised amongst you may have noticed that Year 8 Parents' Evening appeared twice on the calendar... apologies for any confusion. We can confirm that there is one Year 8 parents' evening and it will take place on 11th May 2022. This term, the following reporting is scheduled to take place, with all documents available via Edulink:

Year	Information	Date
7	Progress Review and Boarding report	9th February
8	Progress Review and Boarding report	23rd March
9	Parents' Evening Progress Review	27th January 23rd March
10	Progress Review Parents' Evening	9th February 24th March
11	Report with Mock Results and Boarding report Progress Review	21st January 23rd March
12	Progress Review Parents' Evening	21st January 24th March
13	Mock Results Progress Review	4th February 23rd March

Year 9 GCSE Options

The Year 9 GCSE Options talk to parents scheduled to take place on Wednesday 19th January will now be **online** via the school website. Further details on the Options process will be sent out to Year 9 students and parents next week, and Year 9 have had their initial briefing on the options process in Friday 5 today

Outcome of Uniform Review

We previously shared the pattern of responses students and parents made to the consultation process we ran in the autumn on possible uniform revision. The Governing Body have determined that consistent with the strong desire expressed for more uniformity and equality of expectation, all NEW ENTRANTS to St George's from September 2022 will wear a Harris Tweed jacket (either the current style or the fitted one designed more for a teenage female shape) with either charcoal trousers or tartan skirt.



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In recognition of the strong affiliation some students have for the current Bottle Green Uniform 2 jacket, students currently on roll may convert to the new uniform at any point, or may continue to wear the current Uniform 2 right up until they leave the school. We expect both new and second hand Bottle Green jackets to remain available for a considerable time, albeit Stevensons will re-stock progressively with Tweed jackets. Those on the trial may continue with what they are currently wearing, or revert to "Old Uniform 2" as they see fit. To be clear though, there is no allowable combination of trousers and bottle green jacket in the Old Uniform2 - the jacket is worn with a skirt.

For the moment, either the bottle green or grey St George's pullover can be worn with the 2022 Uniform.

We have heard and are responding to the concerns raised about the headline cost increase from Bottle Green to Tweed. We are reducing the number of items needed by a young person joining St George's with a particular focus on decreasing the proportion and number of items which can only be bought "branded" from Stevensons. We are also looking to enhance our second hand sale provision, such as sourcing more second hand lacrosse sticks for joiners, and selling them for a token sum. Please note that the Governing Body is unusual locally in continuing with its own necessitous clothing allowance to support families.

School uniform requirements seldom sit still for long, and we will be looking during this year to review with the students some items of current sportswear which girls in particular have said they would like addressed. We will be working on this through the student voice process, which we encourage students to contribute to.

For the sake of clarity, can I repeat the headline point: the school is moving to a single uniform with a Tweed blazer; but all current wearers of the bottle green Uniform 2 may continue to stay as they are if they wish until they finish Year 11.

Chapel

Sunday Chapel will continue to take place. Mask wearing will be in place for the whole of the service. We would kindly ask that parents do not attend at this time.

This Sunday, 9th January at 10am, is a Junior Service.

Sports Information

Happy new year to you all. This term continues to be busy with sporting activity as we build to end of season tournaments and Nationals Lacrosse! This weekend we have lacrosse fixtures against Bedford, information is on SOCS including location of playing fields the postcode is MK44 3TT. This weekend we are asking parents to provide parental transport and thank you in advance for supporting the department with travel this weekend.

We have been asked by Bedford to pass on the message that in order to minimise disruption to the local residence and others using the school facilities that parents please park responsibly and consider other users. They have also asked us to pass on the following:

"If the BGS car park is full please can you inform parents they will need to go and park elsewhere in Cople/Cardington and walk to the pitches. Please do not abandon cars on the grass verges, in front of



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driveways or blocking any roads. Parents can drop their daughters and then go and find alternative parking. You can also park at the Five Bells Pub."

It will be cold so please make sure girls are wrapped up in school layers! They have access to hoodies, waterproof jackets, trackies and skins/leggings!

Also Pre warning for our upcoming lacrosse fixture next weekend Saturday 15th January is against Benenden. This will be an 8:15am meet for the coach and the girls will return between 4:30/5:00pm. Teams will be up by Wednesday please ask your daughter to let a member of PE staff preferably their coach know if they can't play by Monday/Tuesday next week.

Our first rugby fixture of 2022 will be against Coopers Company and Coburn. There is a slight change to the published times and venues these have been revised to 1st and 2nd XV at home 11am kick off, U15A at home 9:30 kick off, U14A, U13 A and B are away 10:30 kick off and U12 A and B at home 9:30 kick off.

Fixtures are always subject to slight changes so please check the Schools SOCS website to ensure you have the most up to date information <https://sport.stgeorges.herts.sch.uk/default.asp?Id=357>

Have a great weekend and enjoy the lacrosse matches tomorrow.

Mr D Rees
Director of Sport

Confirmation Service - 6 March 2022

This term the Bishop of St Albans, Alan Smith, will visit for our annual Confirmation Service.

Confirmation is the occasion when adults and young people choose to repeat for themselves the promises that their parents made for them when they were christened as infants. It is when they become members of the Church in their own right.

As they confirm the promises made on their behalf so the Bishop prays that God will confirm his promise he has made of the presence of his Holy Spirit in their lives to guide and encourage them on their way.

Anyone interested in being confirmed this term should contact Rev Warner on swarner@stgeorges.herts.sch.uk

Although the service is in the School Chapel, adults and young people who are not part of the school are also welcome to be confirmed with candidates from amongst our pupils.

Gang Show 2022

We are delighted that the show is going on, and that many of our students are taking part. If that is you, please do make sure your teachers know that you are involved. We will look to be understanding always of the extra time such activities take out of the day, and to adjust homework expectations or deadlines accordingly. Break a leg !



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Actions

Updating Edulink

Have your child's medical, contact or dietary needs changed recently?? Please ensure you keep our records up to date by logging into your parental Edulink account and updating their information.

Thoughts

I read a book over the holidays called "Agent Sonya" by Ben Macintyre, and I have to say it was a great read.

The book recalls the life adventure of Ruth Kuczinskis, a lady who spied for the Russians over what was a twenty year period across two continents and at least 3 different countries. She was one of their most prolific and successful spies of the era, and was responsible for being the spy master who managed to extract the secrets of the first atomic bomb from the USA and British to the Russians. She appears to have been so successful for two reasons, one was her gender, and the other was through the life that she led. Ruth was female in an age when it would have been hard to comprehend that someone of that gender could do something of this nature, and she was a wife and a mother for 3 children. She had the ultimate cover. Ironically the only person in the British Secret Service who questioned who she was, and what she was doing was another woman. That lack of questioning and investigation, along with the loyalty that she gained from those she managed, meant she was able to go undetected for years. For many who knew her she was simply Ruth, a mother of 3 children whose husband was often absent (not unusual in wartime) who often rode her bike through the village. If only they had known.

I wonder in our own way, how many of us lead something of a double life? Our Facebook page shows our happy smiling faces, fabulous adventures, and our fantastic relationships; and all of that may be true, but it is sometimes only in part half the story. How many of us really let people get to know us or are we selective in the parts of our lives and adventures that we let people into?? How many are open and truthful about how we are feeling and the issues we are facing. We all do it, even if it in some small way. How many of us when asked how we are reply "fine" when actually the truth would be very different.

Ruth learnt she had to keep secrets, she had to remember who knew what; she had to juggle her real life, and her secret life and eventually after 20 years she called it a day. Glamour and glitz it was not. She was recognised by the Russians for the work that she had done, but she left behind her a trail of broken or damaged relationships both personal and professional, and a life lived on the knife edge of being discovered. I often wonder in a truthful moment whether she would have considered that keeping up the pretence of her double life had been worth it.

I wonder if we will reflect on our lives in the same way.

Miss B

Signposting (click on each to find out more)



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