



Dear Parents/Carers,



I hope you are all well and have an enjoyable Easter holiday.

When we reflect on this term, we can all be very proud that our family at school is back together and we have some normality again. Thank you for all your support with remote learning this term. We are certainly relieved

that students have come back and we have now embedded a testing programme that is helping to keep us all safe and give us confidence moving forward.

The new block is complete. Our students and staff finally have a state-of-the art Science, Technology and MFL block. We have all moved in safely. Hopefully your son/daughter is impressed and we can now settle down into our new environment without any builders on site.

Years 7 and 8 have completed inter-tutor activity days which were very successful and it was good to see students connecting once again, having the opportunity to relax and have fun together. A great example of our ASPIRE values in action.

A member of the leadership team now visits each lesson, every period of the day except break and lunch times. We call this Tour and it has allowed us to support students, where required, and share the good practice across the school. We could not be more impressed with the behaviour and attitude of our students in lessons despite all the disruption and anxiety that has happened this year.

As we move into next term we look forward to a settled period of time and we think of our Year 11 pupils who, following a period of teaching, will be completing assessments as they enter the final phase of their journey at St George.

Our Chair of Governors is able to share with you in her article some of the implementations we have tried to make following your response to the questionnaire, for which we are very grateful. Thank you for all the positive comments.

Have a wonderful break and stay safe.

Yours faithfully,

James Habberley
Headteacher

Covid-19 Parent Survey



I would like to thank parents and carers for your wonderful feedback in the recent survey about the school's response to the Covid-19 pandemic. We received 327 responses, which is well over a third of all families in the school. Your feedback was overwhelmingly positive.

The vast majority (98%) of parents strongly agree or agree that the school responded well to Covid-19 related issues and has kept them well-informed throughout the pandemic. Here are just a few examples of many lovely comments from parents:

"The support I have received from them is nothing but outstanding!"

"We are just amazed how well everyone at the school has managed this awful situation. A big thank you to the teaching staff"

"The caring ethos of the school comes through"

"I think the school has been utterly amazing"

"Thank you for clear leadership and caring staff, teaching and office/administrative staff."

"I cannot fault the school"

"Staff always go above and beyond to support the students at St George"

"Very impressed! The empathy and concern for the students' academic studies and wellbeing has been very apparent."

"I am extremely impressed with the effective communication, online lessons and pastoral contact. Thank you."

"St George school has been nothing but outstanding during these times"

"Big thanks to all the teachers who are clearly working really hard to make a success of it"

School staff were overjoyed by your many positive and supportive responses, which were a huge boost to them after they worked so hard to continue to deliver remotely the high-quality lessons and pastoral support to pupils for which St George is already widely recognised. Staff, in turn, have commented on how quickly students adapted to new ways of working, and the great effort that so many have applied to their remote learning.

Anna McCormack
Chair of Governors

Diary Dates

Please check our website for important dates in our school calendar. You can find exam information in the Teaching and Learning section of the website. Please also look out for important announcements on our news pages.

You feedback also highlighted some opportunities for improvement, and here is a summary of how the school is responding to your suggestions:

Parent Survey



Our Response

Some parents were concerned about too much screen time



We reduced all online lessons to 45min, to provide breaks for pupils and staff and to take them away from the screen

You prefer the school to use consistent methods for sharing files online



We have confirmed to staff that all files should be shared through MS Teams

Many parents valued the opportunity to do parent consultations via Teams



We will retain an option for remote attendance at parents' evenings, and an online booking system for mentoring day appointments, for the rest of this academic year

Parents prefer to see teachers' faces during parents evening consultations



We will have a video-on policy for all teachers at future online consultations

Parents would appreciate updates about transport fees during lockdown



If your child(ren) did not use the school bus or minibus service from 4th Jan to 8th March 2021 you will not be charged

Your Comments

Parents have found that teachers have sometimes been too quick in explaining content when face to face you would naturally get a pause



We have reviewed how we can take more time explaining tasks and going through content and have shared this best practice across the staff

Parents would appreciate more opportunity for students to complete homework



We will start an after school homework club after Easter for a different year group each night using the computers in the new building

Work on the long awaited replacement for our science and technology building began at the end of 2019. With St George expanding in numbers of students and with its reputation as a first-class school the old building was in desperate need of replacement. The new science and technology block provides excellent new facilities for our students, comprising 7 science rooms, 4 technology rooms including a graphics suite, a food technology room and 3 additional classrooms.

The new three-storey building sits neatly into the raised ground where the multi-games area (MUGA) was. The construction of a replacement MUGA at the beginning of 2020 gave us the extra benefit of a new and greatly improved sports facility next to our excellent 3G all-weather pitches. Construction of the science and technology block continued throughout the year.

The first three months of 2020 saw the foundations being prepared with the steel framework of the new building assembled in March. Work continued throughout the lockdown period with good weather assisting progress and by September, when students returned, our new building was really taking shape, with walls and a roof in place. As windows went in, the inside rapidly progressed and by November the classrooms were near completion. Some lucky students were able to enjoy an early look around their new facility. Members of our student council ceremoniously buried a time capsule in the grounds and



were given a tour of the new classrooms at the end of November. Needless to say, they were impressed by the vast building and its light and airy design. The last few days of December saw our teachers move equipment into their new classrooms, ready for the new term after Christmas.

The building was completed, ready to use when the students returned in January 2021. January however, saw another national lockdown so only a few students were able to enjoy their new classrooms.

We have appointed a food technology teacher and technician to run and develop the new facility and look forward to being able to offer this subject again to St George students in September.

The final stage of this project was the removal of the old building. Work began on this at the end of December and the site, in the shadow of the new building, has been landscaped to enhance the school environment, giving a more spacious feel to the grounds. The old building was constructed in 1958 and served its purpose well for over 60 years.

With this project now completed, we have plans to rebuild and develop other areas of the school that will improve and update the learning environment for our students. This will include a much-needed new library and an expansion of our dining area to accommodate the increasing number of students at St George.



Landscaping

With construction of the new building complete, extensive work on landscaping the surrounding area began in January. The old science buildings were demolished and preparation of the land continued. Extensive excavation of the area was necessary to provide adequate drainage for the new building and surrounding woodland. The very wet conditions made the task more difficult and excavators struggled with the sodden land. However, by mid February the path leading down from the exit doors of the science/technology block was created. For the final touch, trees and shrubs were planted and gates installed in time for the Spring.



Food Tech Reborn

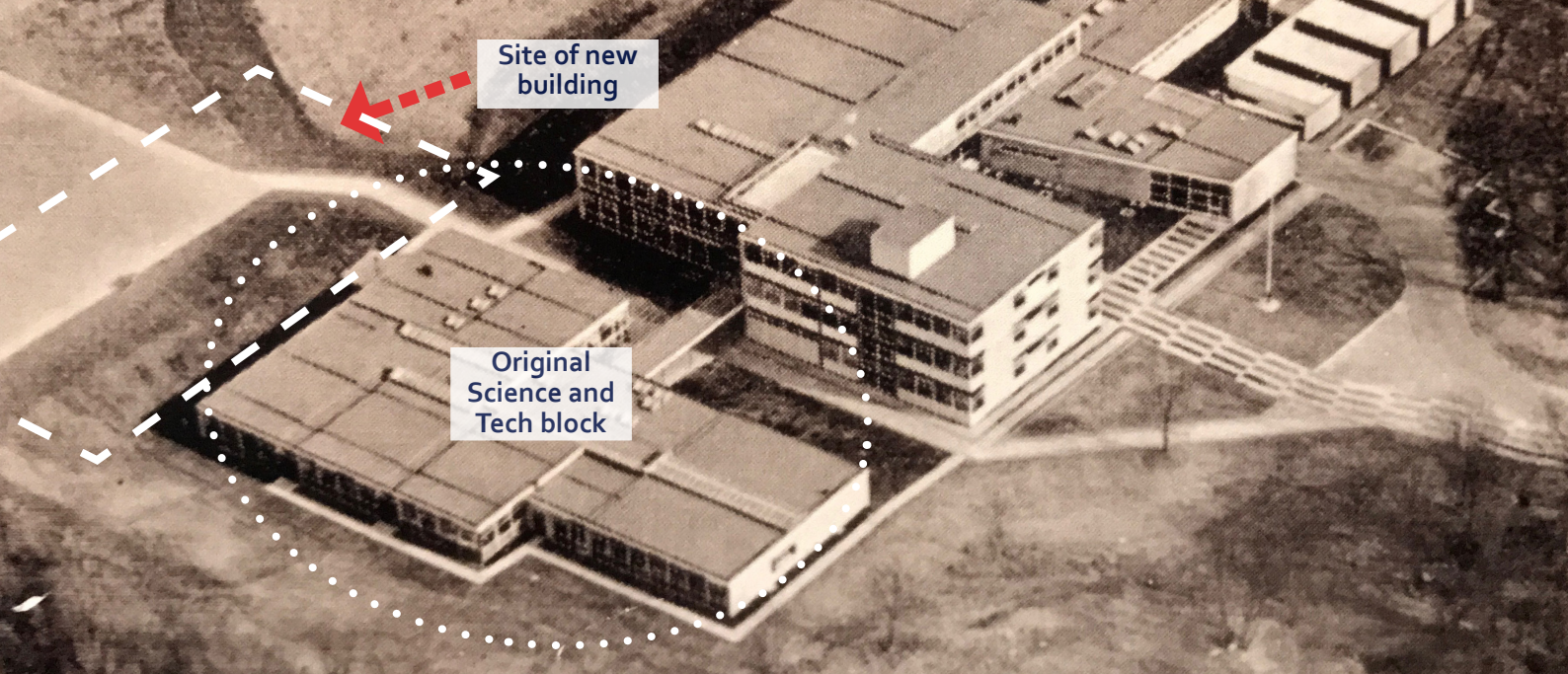
Budding chefs and healthy eaters alike will have a superb new facility to hone their skills. With a dedicated food technology teacher and technician appointed, our new facility is a recipe for success.

From September 2021 we will once again be offering GCSE Food Technology as an option for Years 9 and 10. Our new classroom, storage and preparation area provides the very best for students wishing to study Food Technology to GCSE. Students in Year 7 and Year 8 will also have weekly lessons in food preparation, cooking and nutrition, helping to enable them to make healthy eating decisions as well as delicious meals.





Out with the old...



The science and technology block is no more, having seen over 60 years of service with hundreds of students passing through its doors. Investment in a new science and technology building brings

our facilities for these subjects right up-to-date. The space where the old building was has been left as a landscaped area for now and is a potential place for future expansion.

The images below show students in the 1980s in a woodwork lesson and open-day in science.



Governor Building Fund

St George is a 'Voluntary Aided' school, which means we need to contribute 10% towards the cost of any building work. The governors run a Building Fund to support this, which has helped us to deliver our wonderful new Science and Technology building with its incredible collection of new equipment including a wide array of different drills and saws, a brazing hearth, and modern cooking facilities.

The school also has ambitious plans for more improvements in future - we are hoping to build a brand-new library/resource centre, enlarge the chapel, improve the kitchen and dining areas, and create a more welcoming reception area.



As you can imagine, it is not easy to get funding for such projects, especially in the current economic climate. But parents can help realise these plans by making contributions to the Building Fund. Some families are already contributing, and we are incredibly grateful for your support. We are asking all families that can help to consider giving a voluntary donation of £5 per month by standing order. Contributions of more or less than this are also very welcome, as are one-off donations and corporate sponsorship ideas – please contact us if you are interested in doing this.

If you would like to contribute to the Building Fund, or increase your existing donation, please download a form from the Governors Information section of the website under the Our School tab. Thank you for your contributions, this money really does help us to deliver exciting improvements to the school.

Science Mark

St George Catholic College recognised for excellence in science teaching

St George Catholic College has been awarded the prestigious GOLD Science Mark, in recognition of the excellent work undertaken by our science department.

Science Mark was created by STEM Learning to recognise and celebrate best practice in science departments across the UK. Schools and colleges receive the Science Mark when they can show that they are delivering inspiring lessons for students and demonstrate their department's commitment to high-quality science education.

Adam Little, Professional Development Leader at STEM Learning said, "We are delighted to congratulate St George on receiving the GOLD Science Mark. Being awarded Science Mark is such a prestigious achievement because the assessment process is so rigorous, ensuring the programme is a true hallmark of quality science teaching. Each school and college who receives Science Mark has demonstrated a real and ongoing commitment to excellent science education in their school. St George is a great example of this."

Mr Douglas, the Head of Science who put together the submission, said, "Having GOLD Science Mark to recognise the strength of the department, as we move into our building, is a great achievement by the whole team and shows the super offer that our students have here. We were so pleased with the feedback we received from our application that identified many of the areas we are so proud of including the strength of our curriculum, the commitment to constantly evaluating and improving the quality of our teaching and our strong use of practical work. We are delighted to be the first school in Southampton to achieve this status."



GOLD SCIENCE MARK WINNER 2021—2024

Recognising inspiring practice in school and college science

www.stem.org.uk

Music in Lockdown

Our fantastic music department has been awarded Music Mark status on the recommendation of the Southampton Music Hub in recognition of our commitment to high quality music education and the benefits it brings to our students.

Music has been one of the subjects hit hardest by the pandemic, with the government enacting many restrictions upon practices to halt the spread of coronavirus in schools. As the pandemic recedes this new status will allow for greater networking opportunities to share resources with schools up and down the country, professional development opportunities for our staff and increased resources to further develop our music curriculum here at St George. This will be of great use to our KS4 students in particular as they embark on their studies under the new Eduqas GCSE curriculum and BTEC Tech Award in Music Practice.

Well done to Mrs Pegg and Mr May for this achievement!



A remote drum lesson over zoom in February. The teacher is able to see, hear and communicate with his student.

Duolingo competition 2021

In January the Modern Foreign Languages department launched St. George's first Duolingo competition. Students and staff alike had the opportunity to kick off 2021 by learning a new skill and joining in a bit of friendly competition. Competitors were able to choose any language they would like to have a go at learning; Russian, Italian, Korean, Latin, Klingon... you name it! To earn their place on the leader board, those taking part had to download the Duolingo app and complete as many short lessons and activities as they could each week to earn points. The weekly leader board would then be posted on the Duolingo group on Teams so everyone could keep an eye on each other's progress. Those with the most points each week won themselves a tasty prize!



Although it took a short break over February half term, the competition is now back by popular demand! We've had students from all year groups and several members of staff joining in, with a whole range of different languages on the go. It's been fantastic to see the effort that everyone has been putting in, and how supportive the students have been with encouraging and motivating each other on the Duolingo Teams page throughout lockdown. We look forward to hearing some of the interesting new phrases our students have been learning now that we are back at school, and to sharing our successes together.



Laptops in Lockdown

St George students in need of laptops for their home study have had a generous donation from the "Computers for Kids Campaign". The laptops were in addition to those already supplied by the Department for Education, providing a much needed resource for our lock-down students.

In total, about 65 laptops were issued, 10 reconditioned school laptops, 50 from the DofE scheme and 5 from the Daily Mail laptops for schools scheme.

Mail Force donated top-of-the-range Microsoft Surface 2 Go tablets that were delivered and distributed to St George families according to need.



12-year-old triplets Sandra, Daniel and Manuel with their lockdown laptops

In an article in the Daily Mail online, Headteacher James Habberley commented: 'We are incredibly grateful for the donation from the Daily Mail. We've had a number of students who have been struggling with remote learning, because they've only had one device between a large family... We have already allocated all our donations from the DfE, so this has come at a really important moment for us, and we're very grateful to readers who have donated these laptops. Thank you very much.'

The full Daily Mail article can be viewed on our website [newspage](#).

New Sports Facility



Our new building has benefited St George's sports facilities as well as Science and Technology. Our existing multi-use games area (MUGA) had to be removed to make way for the new Science and Technology building. To compensate for this, a superb new multi games area was created adjacent to our all-weather 3G sports pitch. The new MUGA is much larger than its predecessor and is in a fabulous setting within our expansive sports field area to the rear of the school. The new MUGA was created at the beginning of the project and has already seen a lot of use before the lockdown period. Landscaping and pathways around the new sports area further enhance the excellent sports facilities that St George students are able to enjoy.



Back to School



On the 18th and 19th of March, students of Year 7 and 8 enjoyed a range of activities within their year group bubbles and competed in an inter-tutor competition. Throughout the day students enjoyed a series of team-building tasks and creative activities to reunite with classmates after a long period of isolation and lockdown learning. Towards the end of the day all students participated in an end-ball tournament between tutor groups and showed their support for their fellow classmates. We hope that all students enjoyed the opportunity to socialise and re-connect after a long period of lockdown.

Miss Self
Year 8 Progress Leader



Year 7

As we went into another period of online learning, I was concerned about how the Year 7s would find the change, having only joined St George in September and not being familiar with the use of Microsoft Teams unlike the other year groups who used it last summer. However, the Year 7s took on this new challenge fantastically and I am so proud of all of the hard work that they did and their amazing engagement with their learning throughout a difficult time.

Not only this, but the amount of times I witnessed or was informed about students helping each other if someone was confused or struggling in the lesson, was lovely to see. I think that they will have learnt some valuable skills from this period in their lives; they were resilient with their learning, hard-working, became more independent and learnt some new skills from some of the great extra-curricular challenges they got involved in.

Miss Provenzano
Year 7 Progress Leader

Year 8

After an unsettling first year at St George you have overcome many challenges during these first few years at secondary School. As your progress leader I am unbelievably proud of your resilience and determination during your time at home. I know I speak for all of your teachers when I say well done for your efforts in continuing to promote our ASPIRE values at home as you would in school. We have all learnt many lessons whilst being at home but I think mostly it is that we all need each other. Our St George family are so happy to have you all back learning in the classroom and enjoying your time with your friends again. As we embark on the next chapter I can't wait to watch you all flourish into the hard working students I know you are.

Miss Self
Year 8 Progress Leader

Year 9

I have been so impressed with how well you have all coped in this difficult time. Your efforts with remote learning have not gone unnoticed and the majority of you have shown a real independence to take control of your education. Since returning to school you have settled back into routines fantastically, showing an increased level of maturity with a smile on your face. You have made your tutors and myself very proud and we are extremely glad to have you all back in school!

Miss Foord
Year 9 Progress Leader

Year 10

During a really difficult time you have been doing fantastically well to combat the challenges you have faced. Some of you have really developed some important lifelong skills such as problem solving, resilience and independence. You are in a great position due to the nature of the work you have put in. This is an exciting time for you. I am really confident in your capabilities and you have my full support!.

Keep attacking!

Mr Coppstone
Year 10 Progress Leader

Well Done to All our Students!



Like everyone else the Chaplaincy has had to adapt to the current situation. However the work of the Lord does not stop; Jesus is mightier than any pandemic.

During Advent we had our appeals which you responded to magnificently, the chapel porch was packed with clothes for those families who are struggling and the homeless and boxes of food for the foodbank. In addition we sent lots of hats, scarves and gloves to the Apostleship of the Sea for the sailors.

Our non uniform day raised over £600 that was split between the Apostleship of the Sea and the Wave 105 toy appeal so a brilliant effort from our school community, many thanks.

We have our new building 'Guadalupe' that will be opened officially by Bishop Philip in June of this year. This building is named after Our Lady of Guadalupe and we have a beautiful image of Our Lady of Guadalupe now hanging in the hallway of this building. (There will be more on this next newsletter).

In the mean-time please remember us in your prayers and we pray for all our families each day.

This Easter may the risen Lord Jesus bless you all and fill you with His Holy Spirit and grant us grace and peace.

