

Friday 14th October, 2022



Dear Parent/Carer

Parental Update 101

Good afternoon! I trust our latest fortnightly letter finds you in good health and spirits. This letter will be our last before the October half-term, so I trust your son or daughter enjoys a restful week away from school when we finish in seven days' time!

Farewell

This week we have said 'Goodbye' to our Cleaning Supervisor, Mrs Riley. We're very grateful for the service she's given us since she joined us just under a year ago, and would want to take this opportunity to wish her every success in her future endeavours.

Half-term activities

Sally Dobbing, from Liverpool's Holiday Activities and Food team, writes:

"The October 'Eat to Meet' Half Term programme starts on the October 24th and there are lots of great activities happening over the school holidays, including a few Halloween themed days. Children and young people will be able to access hundreds of activities throughout the October holidays, including specific provision available for children with SEND or additional needs, at no cost. There's a great range of activities across the city including boxing, football, music, dance, cycling, cooking, discos, films, bowling, arts and crafts, drama, a make-up course, trips out and much more! Every day there will be a range of fabulous meals available with many schemes holding family events as well.

"To find out where your nearest scheme and all the details of what is on click [here](#), or visit www.Merseyplay.com and click on the October half term activities link.

"When you have chosen the activity/scheme you will need to contact that organisation to book a place. Each organisation will have either a telephone number, email address or online booking system. If your child has any additional needs or dietary requirements then please discuss this with the organisation when you book. There is no central booking system so please read the details of the programmes on the website and contact the providers directly.

"Liverpool City Council is working with the local schools, voluntary and community organisations, and childcare providers to provide the Half Term Activity programme.

"The Early Help Directory also provides a wealth of useful information and support for families - [Early Help Directory](#)"

Scarlet fever

Our colleagues over at Public Health are concerned about the higher-than-normal levels of scarlet fever. Professor Matt Ashton, Director of Public Health, writes: "*Scarlet fever cases remain higher*

than normal across the North West and nationally. The bacteria which causes scarlet fever also can cause a serious invasive infection called invasive Group A Streptococcus (iGAS), and there has been an increase in these infections too."

He goes on to highlight the following key messages about the disease:

- Scarlet fever is usually a mild illness but can be serious if left untreated. It can be treated easily with antibiotics. It spreads very easily through coughing and sneezing.
- The first signs are flu-like symptoms such as high temperature, sore throat and swollen neck glands. A bumpy rough feeling rash usually appears after 12 to 48 hours on the chest and tummy. If you think your child may have scarlet fever, contact your local GP or NHS111 for advice.
- If the doctor prescribes antibiotics, take the full course. Stay away from nursery, school or work for 24 hours after taking the 1st dose of antibiotics.
- To prevent spread, please encourage children to wash their hands often with soap and water, and use tissues to cover coughs and sneezes. Put used tissues quickly in the bin. Clean and cover cuts and scrapes to prevent infection invading the body.
- Keep shared surfaces like table-tops, toys, taps and handles clean.
- Whilst scarlet fever is circulating it is important that any children and adults with chickenpox do stay off school or nursery until all their blisters have dried over, which is usually 5 days after they first appeared.

Dr Silverstone writes...

"St Margaret's (and many other schools in Liverpool) are seeing an increase in students using e-cigarettes or vapes. We know that some students are vaping on the way to or from school, while others have been found using vapes in school. Local police have confirmed that vaping among young people is on the rise; several parents have already contacted us with their concerns about this issue and how to support their children to make healthy choices.

"Sometimes adults and children alike are unaware of the risks vaping presents, and parents may not recognise the signs or even the devices themselves. Some vapes emit a plume of smoke that has a peculiar and sweet smell, but this is not the case with many devices on the market now. Even though vapes should not be sold to minors, some are designed in ways to deliberately target young people. Some vapes are designed to look like USB storage drives, and many are small enough to be easily concealed or put into a pencil case and be hard to spot.

"Unfortunately, we know that several shops in the Liverpool area do not make appropriate checks when selling vapes, so young people are able to purchase vapes cheaply. If we become aware of local shops selling vapes to minors, we will work with police to report this appropriately.

"We take this issue very seriously due to the health effects vaping can have on children and will continue address this with our students through assemblies and our Learning for Life curriculum. Parents need to be aware that we class vapes as prohibited items. Any student found in possession of such an item in school – whether it is being used or not – should expect to receive a significant sanction."

Finally...

Our next *Update* will go out to parents on Friday 4th November, just before Bonfire Night. Dr Silverstone writes: "*We recently forwarded parents of all KS3 and KS4 pupils a letter from Merseyside Police about Halloween, fireworks and staying safe. If you haven't already done so, please do read that letter and share its contents with your child so that they are aware of how to keep themselves safe. Please also note that any kind of firework or banger is classed as a prohibited item in school. Any student found in possession of such an item in school – whether it is being used or not – should expect to receive a significant sanction.*"

On different note altogether, 1st November is All Saints Day – a day to remember the vibrant history of the Christian faith and the part people have played in it. We have so much for which to be grateful!

With best wishes for the next week and the upcoming half-term,

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephen Brierley', enclosed within a thin black rectangular border.

Stephen Brierley
Principal.