

Dear SAS parents and carers,

It's hard to believe that we are already at the end of another school year! Over the past week, there have been smiles and tears as we look back over the success of the past year while also saying goodbye to some dear members of staff and, of course, our Year 6 pupils. As Year 6 move on to secondary school, we would like to say a special goodbye to those children and families who are leaving SSAS for the last time. Some of our Year 6 families with older siblings have been a special part of our school family for many years, and we will miss them all.

The highlight of our term was our 90th Anniversary celebrations. Bishop Paul McAleenan celebrated our Mass in Ss Alban & Stephen Church giving thanks for the 90 years since the Sisters of Mercy founded our school. This was a very special occasion, attended by pupils, staff, parents, governors, Sisters of Mercy and the Mercy Associates. The PTA also organised a brilliant birthday party, complete with a birthday cake and a rendition of 'Happy Birthday' sung to the school!



Children from EYFS to Year 6 continued to showcase their sporting skills at our well-attended Sports Days. At the end of term, Mr Wallace invited parents to school for our Sports Award Assembly to celebrate the achievements of pupils across the school who have successfully competed in tournaments, bringing home a range of medals, trophies and awards.



All of the classes really enjoyed their final topics of the year and have been lucky enough to go on lots of trips to enrich and deepen their learning. EYFS met lots of friendly dinosaurs at Knebworth House. Year 5 enjoyed a cruise down the River Thames and a ride on the London Eye to follow up on their learning about rivers. Year 6 were lucky enough to visit the West End in London to watch 'The Lion King'.

On Transition Day, all children visited their new classrooms and met their new teachers.

Year 2 parents had their tissues at the ready during a wonderful Year 2 Moving On assembly in which the Year 2 pupils showcased their learning over the year and showed us how ready they are to move to the upper site as they join Key Stage 2. Finally, pupils, teachers and Year 6 parents were amazed by Year 6's spectacular performance of SuperStan. Year 6 are certainly leaving SSAS on a high!

## Catholic Life

Our Catholic Social Teaching topic this half term was Stewardship of Creation. We lived out this principle on Green Day, when we spent the day outside, carrying out environmental learning activities. Well done to our passionate Eco Warriors, who are always looking after God's creation, taking care of the vegetable beds and emptying our food waste bins every lunchtime. St Peter and St Paul's House pupils enjoyed celebrating their special Saint's Day in June with worship, singing and a sweet treat! Finally, the Year 6 pupils took part in a beautiful Leavers' Mass on the last day of term led by Fr Michael and Year 6 pupils.

## SATS Results

We are very proud of all of our pupils who have achieved so well academically. Once again, the hard work of all of our teachers and pupils has paid off with our EYFS, Phonics Screening Check Scores and Key Stage 2 SATS results which are above Hertfordshire averages (results are provisional).

<b>EYFS Good Level of Development</b>	<b>SSAS: 84%</b> (Herts: 70%)	<b>Year 1 Phonics Screening Check</b>	<b>SSAS: 91%</b> (Herts: 81%)
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<b>Key Stage 2 2023-24</b>	<b>Pupils reaching or exceeding the Expected Standard</b>	<b>Pupils working at Greater Depth</b>
<b>Reading</b>	<b>88%</b> (Herts: 78%)	<b>58%</b> (Herts: 34%)
<b>Writing</b>	<b>73%</b> (Herts: 72%)	<b>18%</b> (Herts: 15%)
<b>Grammar, Spelling &amp; Punctuation</b>	<b>85%</b> (Herts: 75%)	<b>57%</b> (Herts: 36%)
<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>88%</b> (Herts: 75%)	<b>43%</b> (Herts: 28%)
<b>Combined (Reading, Writing, Maths)</b>	<b>70%</b> (Herts: 63%)	<b>13%</b> (Herts: 9%)

## PTA News

The PTA's Grow a Pound challenge was a great success and children really showed off their entrepreneurial skills, raising an incredible £2,000! Well done to everyone who took part and a huge thank you to our P.T.A, particularly Mrs Markowitz who organised the challenge.

## Online Safety

This half term, pupils have continued to learn about how to keep themselves safe online as part of our PSHE Life to the Full curriculum. Children may be spending more time online during the summer holidays. <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/talking-child-online-safety/> is a helpful article which gives tips about how to talk to children of different ages about online safety.

## Reminders

We look forward to seeing everyone back in school on Tuesday 3rd September at 8.45. Please be in school promptly. Classroom doors open at 8.45 and close at 8.55 a.m.

**From September, school will end at the slightly later time of 3.15pm for Key Stage 1. This is so we meet new Government guidance about the length of the school week. Key Stage 2 will still finish at 3.20pm.**

Have a wonderful summer holidays with your family. We hope that you are able to spend quality time together, rest, relax and recharge and we wish you every blessing over the next six weeks.

With best wishes,



Ms T. Hackett, Head of School

### **A letter from Mrs Driver, Leadership Support**

As we come to the end of another school year I would like to thank everyone at St Alban and St Stephen for making me so welcome. When I was approached and asked if I would consider being another pair of hands on the leadership team, as a newly retired head I thought this would be a great way to stay in touch with education; little did I expect to get so involved with the school and to really feel a part of what has been going on.

This has certainly been a busy year for all concerned. To have OFSTED descend upon the school in November is bad enough but to then have another Catholic Schools Inspection earlier this term was a huge challenge. However, everyone rose to this challenge, and we were all delighted with the outcomes of both inspections.

I have enjoyed many of the school celebrations and events such as the Mass for the 90th Anniversary and watching the Year 6 play. You have a special school indeed with some excellent teachers and teaching assistants and it has been my privilege to work closely with Ms Hackett and Mrs Smith who are both inspirational leaders. Although I will no longer be visiting the school so frequently as the leadership team has now been supplemented by an Assistant Head, I hope to continue my association with the school as we move into 2024 – 2025 academic year.

*Mrs Driver*

### **A letter from Mr Dolan, Governor**

Dear Parents and Carers,

Thank you for your continuing support and commitment to the school as we reach the end of the academic year. It has been another significant one with the school successfully navigating both Ofsted and Diocese inspections with not only a sense of satisfaction but also anticipation as to how this great school can continue to move forward. Both inspections reflected the tremendous work done by the staff and leadership team, the capability of pupils across all year groups, and support and direction from governors.

The year has also seen changes in the school leadership team. Governors have responsibility for the strategic direction of the school which includes ensuring a strong, committed and capable leadership team. We have worked hard in the last 12 months to put that in place. My thanks to Mr Keane and Miss Coleman for temporarily taking on the Executive Head Leadership required and the platform for preparing for the inspections. Thanks also to Mrs Driver for using her vast experience as a Head teacher in the county to support the school, pupils and governors. And of course, to Ms Hackett and Mrs Smith for continuing to lead the school so effectively during this period of change.

I would like to take this opportunity to update you on how things will look in September. We have already recruited an Assistant Headteacher, Mrs Bates, to provide more capacity to the leadership team. We will welcome Mrs Wilson as our new Executive Head. Mrs Wilson will work here for one day each week to enable the leadership team to better focus on meeting the key priorities to ensure this great school continues to progress. The school will also begin to explore the Diocese's mandate that all Catholic schools should become an academy. Early indications are very encouraging and should mean little if any change for pupils and staff.

Finally, in a planned handover I'm stepping down as Chair of Governors after more than 4 years although I will be staying on as a governor. Miss Petty Lai will take over as Chair. Miss Lai has been a Foundation Governor for 18 months, and I'm sure you will continue to support her and the school over the next year. I hope you and the pupils enjoy a restful summer ready to return refreshed in September.

*Gerry Dolan*  
*Former Chair of Governors*