

Mount St. Joseph

"A community of Learners, Believers and Friends"

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17 July 2020

Hello Year 8,

Re: End of year 8

I hope you are all keeping safe well. This year has been a real rollercoaster with lots of challenges, but also some wonderful achievements. I am aware that the last few months have been a really strange situation for everyone, but I am really proud of how you have stepped up to the mark and been proactive both with your home learning and supporting your families. I would just like to highlight a few events where year 8 pupils have really shone and made the school very proud.

Firstly, back in September a group of year 8 girls represented MSJ at the Digital Her Roadshow, winning the Most Engaged and Committed School Award after competing with other schools in Bolton. Then we had a very successful parents' evening in November, which gave you and your families chance to discuss your progress with your teachers and celebrate the success you were having in each subject area.

Following on from this, just before Christmas, was our drop-down day: 'It's OK, to not be OK'. I was really proud of how well you engaged in this event; mental and emotional health is more important now than ever with the current pandemic. I hope that you have been able to use some of the strategies you learnt that day, to help keep you and your family positive over the lockdown period.

After Christmas, some of you attended a STEM Formula 1 day, at Bolton University; again, winning the accolade of the Future Stars Award, really showing that the pupils at MSJ are thirsty for knowledge and rise to any challenges put in front of them. We then, as a whole school, held a Careers Day in February. You engaged in various Barclays Life Skills sessions that gave you the first taste of the personal skills needed to be successful in any career. We were also really fortunate, on that day, to have an inspiring talk by the Greater Manchester Police, informing you of all the exciting careers available in the police force and lots of advice of how to support the wider community. I also remember a lot of you going into room 8 at break time to try on all the equipment, I think I have some amusing photos that I am sure can be brought out in year 11!

Finally, back in March you had the opportunity to make some provisional option choices. You had some really informative assemblies explaining to you the details of the courses and potential careers the subjects could lead to. Again, you showed a high level of maturity and interest in these option choices, really taking responsibility for the next stage of your school career.

Since lockdown, I have been keeping a keen eye on all the wonderful work you have been sending in, not just for your academic subjects but also for events such as the VE Day challenges, outstanding performances in MSJam and the Virtual National Sports Week, you really should be incredibly proud of yourselves.

It has been a delight to be able to award various pupils Premium Banking Points certificates, with the highest year 8 pupil achieving 1631 points over the two terms. Please don't worry about your point balances, you will have an opportunity to spend them at the beginning of year 9.

Furthermore, it is wonderful to see so many year 8 pupils receiving awards and certificates. Although, we would have normally rewarded you at our annual Awards Evening, alas this was not possible this year, but it was lovely to see so many year 8 names nominated.

All that is left is for me to wish you a lovely summer holiday! I really hope you take time to relax and enjoy the weather with your friends and families. These last four months have been incredibly difficult for everyone, but as your head of year, I am incredibly proud of everything you have achieved and the resilience you have shown during lockdown.

I will continue to be your head year as you move into Year 9, alongside your new Pastoral coordinator Miss Gettins. I am really looking forward to seeing you all in September and for you to use your enthusiasm and maturity to make a fantastic start to year 9.

Take care, stay safe and I will see you in September

Kind regards

Miss Snape
Head of Year 8