



19 July 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

'FROM SACRIFICE TO HEALING'

As our school year draws to a close, we welcome in the festival of Eid-ul-Adha (the festival of sacrifice). Eid-ul-Adha commemorates the Prophet Ibrahim's devotion to God and his readiness to sacrifice his son, Ismail. This parallel to the story of Abraham and Isaac in the Hebrew Scriptures is a powerful reminder of the shared roots of the world's Abrahamic faiths. Christians, Muslims and Jews across the globe understand this narrative as important in emphasising our need to trust in, and rely on, God.

For Christians, the story of the 'child of promise' points to a greater exchange that happens at the cross: the Son of God in place of us. In Jesus, God brings his own promised Son into death and, through the resurrection, God spares you and me (just like God spared Isaac). In our own everyday lives, we are challenged to question our willingness and commitment to obey God's command.

It seems fitting, therefore, to recognise in this letter the immense sacrifice made by children and young people over the course of this academic year. They have shown the type of loyalty and obedience that, as adults, we so often fail to exhibit. As football fans have revelled in the streets in their thousands, with little regard to public health, our children have continued to take the sort of disciplined action required to suppress the coronavirus. They have played their part, unequivocally, and I wish to celebrate every pupil for their responsible behaviour. Thank you from the bottom of my heart!

We now move forward into a period of healing. The next academic year will see a return – as far as possible – to a semblance of normality. But let me clear: the challenges of the global pandemic have far from left us. As we continue to wrestle with the implications of high rates of infection in young people, your renewed trust and patience will be required.

There is much we are doing to prepare for a year of 'reset'. Notably, we have invested in new staff so that there can be 10, rather than 8, classes in each year group. This means more face-to-face time between your child and their teachers. In Key Stage 5, there is an increase from 4 lessons to 5 lessons per week. And, mindful of the ongoing challenges in emotional health and wellbeing, we will see a considerable expansion in our pastoral team in addition to a doubling in the amount of educational psychology and on-site counselling available to pupils. The curriculum, largely, will return to being broad and balanced.

We will also need to rekindle our efforts in establishing good routines and learning behaviours. You should expect a renewed focus on issues such as classroom conduct, uniform and mobile phones, your support for which will be critical to the smooth operation of the school.

Of course, there are some positive lessons that we have learned during this extraordinary year. We intend to capitalise on digital approaches which have allowed us to reach out to a wider audience and provide flexibility and convenience for parents. There will also be a retention of learning zones for each year group, although these will operate more flexibly than before.

When will children return to school?

Years 7 and 12 begin on Monday 6 September 2021. All other students return on Tuesday 7 September 2021. Arrival remains at 8.30am in time for the beginning of lesson 1 at 8.40am.

Will school uniform be required?

Yes. The school uniform has not changed and it is expected that all students adhere to the uniform policy (see <http://www.stteilos.com/parents/uniform/>).

What equipment will be needed?

Pupils will need the usual classroom equipment, comprising a pencil case with pens, pencils, a ruler and rubber as a minimum. As we return to the use of exercise books, the need for an appropriate school bag will be essential.

Will school catering resume?

Initially, students will be required to continue to bring a packed lunch to school with plenty of drinking water. It is our intention to explore the reintroduction of school catering during the first term.

Will face coverings be needed?

It is our expectation that pupils will no longer be required to wear face coverings to school. This is dependent, of course, on the changing public health picture.

When are results days?

Results at Level 3 (mostly A and AS level) will be available between 9am and 12pm on Tuesday 10 August 2021 from the school. Results at Levels 1 and 2 (mostly GCSE and vocational equivalent qualifications) will be available between 9am and 12pm on Thursday 12 August from the school.

Please note that enrolment into the sixth form for Year 11 also takes place on 12 August 2021 upon collection of results.

Keeping in touch

Please do continue to visit our website (<http://www.stteilos.com/news/>) for the latest announcements. You may also wish to follow us on twitter (<https://twitter.com/stteilos>).

In our readings this Sunday, we were reminded of the refreshment, healing, purpose, challenge, abundance and assurance in our relationship with the true and living God. The words seem particularly apposite in bringing my final letter of the year to an end:

Psalm 23

The Divine Shepherd
A Psalm of David

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.
He makes me lie down in green pastures;
he leads me beside still waters;
he restores my soul.
He leads me in right paths
for his name's sake.

Even though I walk through the darkest valley,
I fear no evil;
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff—
they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord
my whole life long.

As ever,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ian Loynd". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mr I Loynd
Headteacher