



Headteacher's Weekly Newsletter

Friday 2nd October 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we reach the end of another busy week at St Vincent's, it is remarkable to think that we are already five weeks into the new academic year.

At this point in the term, our pupils are well established within their routines - and it has been particularly pleasing to observe the continued progress being made across school. As I move between classrooms and spend time talking with our children and young people, I am seeing increasing confidence, independence and engagement with learning. I have visited many classes this week from Food Technology, Art & DT and Humanities.

At St Vincent's, achievement will always look different for different young people. Sometimes it is something immediately visible – completing a piece of work, achieving a qualification or reaching a new milestone. At other times, the most significant progress might be having the confidence to contribute in a lesson - travelling more independently, persevering when something is difficult or successfully managing a new situation.

Recognising these individual steps is incredibly important. Our role is not simply to provide opportunities for our pupils - but to ensure those opportunities enable them to make meaningful progress from their own individual starting points.

House points as we come to the end of the week are Elm 74, Ash 39 and Oak 45.

St Vincent's PTA – Get Involved!

Our Parent Teacher Association (PTA) plays an important role in bringing together parents, carers, staff and friends of St Vincent's to support our school and, most importantly, our children and young people.

The PTA helps to organise events, raise additional funds for activities and resources, and provides another valuable way for families to become involved in the wider life of the school. It is also a great opportunity to share ideas, meet other families and help us continue to develop the experiences and opportunities available to our pupils.

We would love to welcome new members this year. You do not need to be able to make a huge time commitment – whether you can attend meetings, help at an occasional event, support fundraising or simply contribute ideas, every bit of involvement is valued.

If you would be interested in joining the PTA or finding out a little more about how you can get involved, please get in touch with the school via the school office: office@stvin.com

New faces, new ideas and new members are always very welcome!

Headteacher's Quick 5

I have continued to enjoy catching up with pupils through my Headteacher's Quick 5.

What matters most about pupil voice is what we do with it. Listening to our young people helps us understand what they value about St Vincent's - what is working well for them and where there may be things we can improve.

I will continue to speak with different pupils throughout the term and use those conversations as another important part of understanding their experience of school.

A visit from Dale Vince & Our Eco Journey

This week, we were delighted to welcome Dale Vince to St Vincent's to hear more about the progress we are making as a Ministry of Eco Education School and to see some of the exciting developments taking place across our school estate.

The visit provided a fantastic opportunity to reflect on how far we have already come, while also discussing our ambitions for the future. We were able to share the work taking place across school, the improvements being made to our environment and, importantly, how sustainability and environmental responsibility are becoming increasingly embedded within the experiences of our children and young people.

We also spent time looking ahead to our future plans for the school estate and considering how we can continue to develop spaces that are sustainable, purposeful and provide even greater opportunities for our pupils to learn, explore and develop their independence.

Our work as a Ministry of Eco Education School is about much more than the physical environment. We want our young people to understand the world around them, recognise the contribution they can make to it and have meaningful opportunities to help shape a more sustainable future.

A huge thank you to Dale for taking the time to visit St Vincent's and share in our journey.

Residential

It was great to spend some time in residential again this week, catching up with our young people and hearing about how their week has been going. These informal opportunities to

sit, talk and listen to pupils are incredibly valuable and give me another important insight into their experiences at St Vincent's.

I was particularly pleased to hear about some of the key working sessions taking place. These provide dedicated time for young people to work alongside a trusted member of staff, reflect on how things are going, discuss what is important to them and identify individual goals they would like to work towards. Importantly, they help ensure that our young people have a voice in their residential experience and are actively involved in decisions about their own development.

There was also plenty of excitement around some birthday plans for one of our pupils! It was lovely to hear our young people talking together about how they would like to celebrate and making plans for what promises to be a very special occasion.

Residential is about much more than simply staying away from home. It provides opportunities to develop relationships, make choices, build confidence and independence, and ensure that our young people feel listened to, supported and very much part of their residential community.

Music Tutoring Sessions

There has been a particularly lovely sound drifting through St Vincent's recently, with our piano tutoring sessions taking place in the Chapel.

It has been wonderful to hear the piano filling this special space as pupils develop their musical skills, confidence and enjoyment of playing. Whether learning something new, practising a familiar piece or simply discovering what they can create at the keyboard - each session provides another opportunity for our young people to express themselves and experience the enjoyment that music can bring.

There is something quite special about walking through school and hearing music coming from the Chapel – one of those small moments in a busy school day that makes you stop and listen.

A huge well done to all of our budding pianists.

Another busy and varied week at St Vincent's comes to an end, with so many examples of our young people learning, developing and making the most of the opportunities around them. Thank you, as always, to our pupils, staff, families and wider school community for everything you contribute.

I hope everyone has a relaxing and enjoyable weekend.

With best wishes,

Mr. D Swanston

Headteacher