



St Augustine's Catholic College

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Headteacher Mr Aidan Dowle, MA, NPQH, NPQEL

Our ref: AFD/JFL
4th September 2026

Dear parents and carers,

I wanted to write a short note at the end of this first week to thank you for all your support in preparing our young people to return to school. Today, we welcomed the whole school back for the first time, and it was fantastic to see such positive energy throughout the school.

In my assemblies with each year group today, I spoke about the importance of taking the moment that we have and turning it into an opportunity. Taking an opportunity often means taking a risk. For all of us, there will be things in life that we are afraid of. Fear can, of course, help to keep us safe, but there are also times when it can prevent us from challenging ourselves and discovering what we are capable of.

As we begin this new academic year, there is an opportunity for each of us to reflect on our potential and to be prepared to challenge ourselves to develop and grow into the people we are meant to be. I hope this is something that all of our young people will embrace in the weeks and months ahead.

We were particularly impressed this morning by how smart the pupils looked as they arrived at school ready to learn. I am grateful for your cooperation in ensuring that our uniform continues to be something in which everyone can take pride.

We have also sent a number of communications concerning mobile phones, and I would encourage you to make sure that you have read our policy and are clear about the high expectations that are now in place. The national conversation around mobile phones in schools has developed considerably, and government guidance makes clear the importance of schools creating phone-free environments.

For us, however, this is about much more than simply enforcing a rule. We want to give our young people valuable time away from their devices so that they can be fully present with one another, building relationships, talking, laughing and enjoying time together. There is an increasing body of research and public discussion about the impact that the online world is having on this generation of young people.

Here at St Augustine's, we believe that strong human relationships and being truly present to one another are essential foundations for future success and happiness. This is at the heart of the community we want for our young people, and we are grateful for your continued support as we put this policy into practice.

As we start our new academic year, there is much to look forward to and a number of important dates for you to be aware of. This September, we will be holding **Engagement Evenings** for every year group in the school.

This year, we will be unveiling our new reporting and feedback system, which will enable parents and carers to engage more fully with their child's learning. A key part of each evening will therefore be to introduce the new system and show you how it works. The evenings will also provide important information specific to your child's year group and what you can expect during the year ahead.

It is therefore very important that at least one parent or carer attends for each child. Due to capacity, pupils are not expected to attend. We very much look forward to seeing you.

The dates for our Engagement Evenings are:

Monday 21 September – Year 7

6.00–7.15pm | Main Hall

Thursday 24 September – Years 8 & 9

6.00–7.15pm | Main Hall

Monday 28 September – Sixth Form

6.00–7.15pm | The Lasallian Centre

Thursday 1 October – Years 10 & 11

6.00–7.15pm | Main Hall

At the end of next week, we will publish our first Gazette of the new academic year. I would encourage parents and carers to make time to read this each week. It is a wonderful way to see the tremendous variety of activities, achievements and events taking place across the College, as well as an important source of key information throughout the term.

Starting something new is always accompanied by a mixture of excitement, expectation and, sometimes, anxiety. I hope that today's experience has been a positive one for everyone. Next week, we begin to settle into the rhythm of learning and school life, and I hope that every member of our community will take the opportunities that lie ahead, challenge themselves and contribute to making our school the very best that it can be.

Thank you once again for everything you have done to support such a positive start to the year.

My best wishes

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Dowle', written in a cursive style.

Aidan Dowle
Headteacher