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Headmistress: Mrs Rebecca Dougall BA MA

4 May 2018

Dear Parents

Moving into Middle School

Your daughter's time in Lower School at St Helen and St Katharine will soon be drawing to a close and in September, as she starts in Year 9, she will move into Middle School.

It is at this stage that we take the opportunity to rearrange the year group into new forms. Changing the forms as the students move into Middle School serves two important functions: the first is to refresh a year group who have been learning in the same groups for two years and give them an opportunity to develop not only new ways of working in class but also a wider circle of friends. This links with the second, which is that we have a small intake of new students in Year 9, mainly from preparatory schools who have a 13+ entry transfer to senior school and it is good for them to join a form where the students are relatively new to each other.

The year group will thus be divided into four new forms for September. They will have a new form tutor and support tutor, who will guide them through the next three years, under the care of the Head of Middle School, Mrs Helen Nash.

The forms will be arranged by me in collaboration with the Year 8 form tutors and support tutors who have observed the students over the last two years, who know them well and are aware of their friendship groups. Group dynamics will also be considered to ensure that the mix of students in each form is the most advantageous. It is worth noting that in Year 9 the students will, in fact, be taught less in their forms: mathematics and French will still be set according to ability; the second languages and option subjects will be taught in options groups and English and sciences will be taught in six smaller groups to ensure more contact time between teacher and student.

The allocation of form groups will happen shortly and I will be talking to the students, together with the tutors, about the way this will be done. Tutors will be happy to talk to students about any questions or concerns they may have about this process, but this must be done before Friday 18 May, after which the new form groups will be finalised.

The students will be told their new form groups for Year 9 on the day of the induction afternoon on Tuesday 12 June. During the afternoon, the students will join their new form groups, meet both their new tutors and the students joining the school and take part in various activities aimed to help the new groupings bond together.

If you have any questions or particular concerns about your daughter's move into Middle School please do not hesitate to get in touch with me before Friday 18 May. We cannot take into account any concerns raised after this date. While this is a change for the students, I would like to reassure you that each year the vast majority

fly through this exciting transition. We will be measured and reassuring in our approach to this change and ask for your support in taking this approach too, so the transition into Middle School is a smooth and happy one.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "K. Taylor". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping underline that loops back under the first part of the name.

Mrs Kay Taylor
Head of Lower School
ktaylor@shsk.org.uk