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Dear Parents and Carers

Thank you for your support and patience following Friday's school closure. The loss of both power and water meant that we had no choice but to close the school for the day. While this was undoubtedly inconvenient for families, the safety and wellbeing of our pupils and staff must always be our main concern, and I am grateful for your understanding when circumstances such as these are beyond our control.

It has otherwise been another busy and positive week at St John Henry Newman.

It was lovely to see so many families at our Year 11 Expectations Evening last Thursday. There was a real sense of purpose as we begin the final stage of our pupils' journey towards their GCSE examinations. Success for our young people is very much a team effort. The partnership between pupils, parents and carers, teachers and the wider school community is incredibly important, and I would like to thank families for the support you continue to give our Year 11 pupils. Working together, we can help them to make the very best of the opportunities in front of them.

Our sporting fixtures are gathering momentum, with the football season now very much in full flight. Our Year 9 boys played a very competitive match against Caldew this week. It is nice to be able to mention football in this newsletter without making a reference to Manchester City!

Monday was SALAD Day, with a fantastic range of activities taking place across the school. Pupils enjoyed Careers activities, explored Genetics, took part in Orienteering at Talkin Tarn, attended sessions with Hello Future, and visited the University of Cumbria. It was a great opportunity for pupils to learn in different environments and to experience opportunities beyond the normal classroom.

Speaking of Talkin Tarn, I received a particularly lovely piece of feedback this week. My mother-in-law, Kath, was at Talkin Tarn on Monday morning kindly walking my dog, Kobe. She didn't know that the three busloads of pupils she encountered were from St John Henry Newman, but she commented afterwards on how polite and engaging they were as they walked around the Tarn.

It is always lovely to hear such positive comments from members of the public about our pupils — even if, on this occasion, that member of the public happens to be a member of my own family!

Looking ahead to next week, Wednesday sees the return of our annual Careers Fair. A wide range of employers and local businesses will be coming into school, giving pupils in every year group the opportunity to speak directly to them about the work they do, the different careers available and the opportunities they can offer. Experiences such as these are an important part of helping our pupils to understand where their education can take them.

My thanks to Mrs James for all her work in organising the Careers Fair and to all the employers and organisations giving up their time to come into school and speak with our pupils.

With my very best wishes for a relaxing weekend.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Declan McArdle'.

Mr Declan McArdle
Headteacher