

Headteacher's
Newsletter

from the
heart



The Catholic Children's Society

I am extremely proud of the efforts, generosity and enthusiasm demonstrated by both by our staff and students, in their contributions to The Catholic Children's Society's Christmas appeal.

A big 'thank you' to everyone who contributed to raising funds and providing Christmas gifts for the society.

Our donations will make a significant difference to vulnerable and less fortunate children and their families in need - and we should all take great pride in this achievement. This collective effort resulted in yet again filling two cars with toys, games and clothing for this important charity.

A special 'shout out' goes to the incredible Kairos Team and tutors, whose dedication and high energy levels made the organisation of the gift collection and the sorting process in the Chapel so joyful. Also to the Business BTEC students who organised a Christmas Fair in support of the Catholic Children's Society (see page 7).

Thank you all.



Advent Liturgy



It was wonderful to see so many members of our school community at the Advent Service on Thursday evening.

The choir and soloists performed beloved carols beautifully, accompanied by our talented musicians. Their renditions of Rutter and Stopford songs were truly angelic and sensational to listen to.

The readers delivered the Word of God with confidence and clarity, sharing the meaningful message of the Gift of Hope.

It was a truly special way to end our school term.



A prayer for Christmas

*God of gentleness,
of hope and of peace,
yours is the love
that can conquer hate,
the peace that can destroy violence,
the joyful wonder that can
transform cynicism and despair.
Plant deep into us your people
the gospel of hope
and the power of transforming love,
and give us ears to hear
the angels sing,
and the voices to take up the song.*



Fifty Year Anniversary of the Five Goals of Sacred Heart Education

The founder of the Society of the Sacred Heart (Madeleine Sophie Barat) had a particular philosophy of education. She believed in the importance of the individual and personal growth; the need for action to make the world a better place; the importance of valuing intellect and of an active faith. This philosophy was further developed by a later Superior General, Janet Erskine Stuart and fifty years ago it was expressed in the form of Five Goals of Sacred Heart Education. Students at Sacred Heart schools across the world work towards these goals and this makes Sacred Heart education so unique.

Normally we focus each year on one of the goals in rotation but this year is different. This year we are focusing on all five goals in recognition of their fifty year anniversary.

While the goals themselves are only 50 years old, the philosophy they are based on is far older. This has stood the test of time and remains as relevant today as it did when it was created.

Madeleine Sophie Barat, who was a teenager at the time of the French Revolution and who sought to contribute to the development of a better world by communicating the love of Jesus Christ. A Madeleine Sophie relic has been included with the altar of the newly restored Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris.



Goal of Social Awareness that impels to action

By Teresa L and Anna R, Year 8

Social Awareness is one of the key components of everyday life. It is a skill that allows us to empathise with others and relate to different backgrounds. As Catholics, it is an essential part of our faith. We are taught by Jesus through his teachings and sermons, that we are all brothers and sisters, and that although we are all different and unique, we are all equal in God's eyes.

In Galatians 3:26-29, it says "So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith...There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

This shows the importance of equality and how we should treat each other equally. Are we treating others with respect and equality? Are we following Jesus' teachings?

At our school, each form class receives a poster to help us think and reflect on ways we could apply Jesus' teaching in our everyday lives. Some of our ideas:

- Thinking twice before saying something that might sound unkind.
- Thinking if you are saying something important or nice to another person.
- Thinking about ways we can make others feel good.
- Empathising with others and finding ways to support those in need.
- Trying to be fair and non-judgmental.
- Demonstrating kindness and compassion, thinking about how others are feeling.
- Thinking about ways to protect our world and to alleviate the climate crisis.

The Goal of Social Awareness

Discuss and reflect on each of the 5 statements, and identify three actions you can take to put the goal of social awareness into practice.



We also discussed in our forms, why social awareness is so important.

Social awareness is important because we are able to connect with others on a deeper level, and understand their motivations and beliefs. Social awareness is a skill that we must work to build in ourselves and share with others. It is about learning from our mistakes, knowing what is just and unjust, and facing all our challenges with faith and hope, leading us to make better decisions.



The Goal of an Active Faith

By Sophie T and Elizabeth T, Year 8

The goal of faith is all about your relationship with God and getting closer with God. In our school, faith is extremely important as we try to keep Jesus at the heart of everything we think, do and say.

For the first time, we managed to start the school year with a wonderful whole school mass - over 1,100 students and staff filled the Sports Hall and Fr Martin Poulson was the celebrant. The mass was really special, as it was our way of celebrating fifty years of Sacred Heart Goals; with the main focus on the Goal of Faith.

Throughout the months of September and October we continued to focus on the importance of our faith in assemblies and year group masses.

During morning prayer in our forms, we discussed the why faith is extremely important to us and within our Catholic school community. We shared prayers and biblical quotes that were meaningful to us and wrote some of these on our class poster.

To help build and strengthen our relationship with God we talked about trying to attend mass regularly, pray and ask for forgiveness and to read the Bible. We also suggested some books in the Bible that would be useful to read in order to strengthen our faith, such as: Psalm 41 and 40 and Matthew Ch 5.

God is always here for us when we need him so it is really important that we have a good relationship with Him.



Heartfest 6

By Jaya S and Clara A, Year 8



In September a group of Year 8 Kairos and Goals students from went on a residential retreat to Newcastle. We met with students from four other Sacred Heart schools - Sacred Heart Fenham (primary and secondary school), Sacred Heart Roehampton (Primary school) and Sacred Heart Woldingham (Secondary school).

After a long train journey to northern England, we arrived in Newcastle and began with some fun games to help us relax and get to know each other, including Jocky Up, World Conquer, and Heads or Tails. While all the schools were great, personally, we think Hammersmith was the best but...

Afterwards, we were shown to our rooms and then thankfully, we enjoyed a lovely dinner - we were all starving by then.

In the evening, we were all tired from the long day of travel so happily went straight to bed.

The following morning, we started off the day with some lively and fun activities like giant Jenga and karaoke. We even did some singing and sign language to the song 'Our Father'.

Throughout the retreat, all the students participated in multiple team building games such as one where we had to each pass on what we saw, then heard and then draw it. Some of the more calming activities included bracelet making, prayer writing and other arts and crafts which were equally nice. One of the most popular activities was the Escape Room where we had to complete tasks in order to receive bible quotes and numbers to crack open the padlock and escape before dinner.

On the last day we all received our HeartFest T-shirts which were all matching! Sacred Heart Hammersmith and Woldingham were invited to visit Fenham High while Sacred Heart, Roehampton went off to visit Fenham Primary. We were given a tour around the school and it was interesting to see how their classes were organised differently to ours. We did however notice some of the similarities in the exterior and interior of the school. After the tour we attended a liturgy, where some of us participated in the 'Our Father' sign language song. At the end of the service, we were each given a biscuit in the shape of Sacred Heart's logo. They were delicious!

We said goodbye to our new friends and the wonderful HeartFest team and made our way back to Hammersmith.

Throughout HeartFest, we celebrated 50 years of the Sacred Heart Goals, focusing on a different goal each day and doing activities relating to them. We felt we learned the most about the goal of Community, as we reflected a lot on how we were all one big Sacred Heart family. We all made new friends with students for the different schools, learned their names and about their backgrounds, and felt united as a community.



Finally we were commissioned into the first Sacred Heart Schools and College Network, we were so proud to be the first people to do so. HeartFest 6 was an amazing and wonderful experience for everyone and we would love to go back after having a lovely time!

Thank you HeartFest!

Israeli-Palestinian Crisis Zoom meeting with CAFOD



Our students have expressed their passionate concern about the suffering they witness and their genuine desire to respond in love to the escalation of the Palestinian/Israeli conflict. Therefore, when Beata Rozycka, an alumna of Sacred Heart Hammersmith, came to address our sixth form about the work of CAFOD, we began a conversation about a possible talk by CAFOD on the Israeli Palestinian crisis. Beata worked so hard to secure this talk with Maya Street, their Programme Officer for the Middle East. Her talk was informative and grounded in the principles of Catholic Social Teaching.

We were struck by the number of Israeli Palestinian partnerships that are operating in response to the crisis – these initiatives rarely make the news. Our goal of social awareness impels us to action, so in the Spring Term, we will look at ways we can act as compassionate Christians in response to areas of conflict in the world.

Ms Maton (Deputy Headteacher)

The CAFOD talk about the Israeli Palestinian crisis really opened our eyes to the struggles people face in that region. While it's easy to feel detached when we hear about these issues in the news, today's discussion brought to light the heartbreaking stories of loss and pain endured by those living in Palestine. We were particularly struck by the fact that over 60% of those in Gaza are under 25, reminding us of the shared humanity in this crisis. The speaker emphasized our moral responsibility to seek change, engage in open conversations, and support charitable initiatives. We were moved by the mention of the separation wall that divides families and communities, which highlights the need to build bridges instead of walls, as Pope Francis has said. Instead of leaving with a sense of despair, we felt a strong desire to help through fundraising, writing to our MPs, and educating others. Today's talk reinforced our belief that we, as young people, must advocate for peace and ensure that living without fear of violence becomes a reality for everyone, especially those who have been stripped of that right.

Gabriela B & Tara G (Year 11)

I was incredibly pleased to hear the talk that had been organised with CAFOD members to discuss the increasingly distressing situation in Gaza. The talk was both informative and inspiring in many ways. The political and historical influences were explained, but without taking away from the



importance of going beyond these complexities and compassionately looking at what people are experiencing now in Gaza, the West Bank and Israel. One of the things that struck me the most was the 'separation wall', originally built in 2002; it now extends through 85% of Palestinian land, dividing families and towns. Pope Francis reminded us of the necessity to build bridges and not walls.

In a world that seems to be running decisively towards a complete rearmament and seems to prepare for a future of wars, today's talk was one of the few occasions in which a flame of hope was lit in the thick darkness of indifference and fear surrounding us. Whilst it was intensely touching, I did not leave the classroom with the sole thought of death and destruction on my mind; rather it stimulated a sense of responsibility to help, and this can be done in countless ways such as fundraising, writing to our MP's, praying and most importantly never stop asking questions.

If anything, today's talk reinforced the conviction that war, apart from being the most stupid of human activities as it does not re-establish either truth or law, is by far the least humane and most degrading response. We, as young people, do not want a future, or a present either, in which living in peace, without a constant fear of bombs and violence, is merely a vision. We must make this a reality for us but undoubtedly also for those who have been stripped of their right to live in peace.

Micol F P (Year 11)





Lunchtime Concert on St Cecilia Day

On 22 November, in honour of St Cecilia, the patron saint of music, we hosted two lunchtime concerts. The Reception Room was bursting at the seams with supportive peers there to listen to the talents of our wonderful Sacred Heart Musicians.

Students were selected to perform after participating in the Performance Showcase that took place earlier in the term.

Well done to all musicians involved!

Watch this space for the Spring and Summer term lunchtime concerts coming soon!

St Cecilia in green at the bottom, with organ pipes, as depicted on one of our cloister painting panels. You can see a spot of bright blue on her shoulder where the varnish has chipped off, so she may look very different after restoration!

Senior Choir Carol Singing at BBC Television Centre

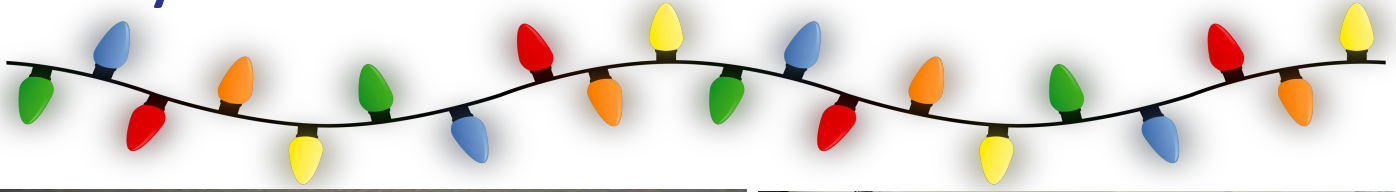


The senior choir had the wonderful privilege of singing Christmas carols underneath the giant Christmas tree at the BBC Television Centre. Despite the damp conditions, spirits were high, with a greatly appreciative crowd cheering them on.

They performed a selection of traditional Christmas carols and modern Christmas songs featuring a few solo and duet numbers by some of our superbly talented singers: Ava K, Freda K and Seraphina P.

What a wonderful way to kick off the Christmas season, and many thanks to the music and choir team Ms Jones, Mr McConnell and Ms Lynn for helping coordinate the event.

Business Students organise a highly successful charity Christmas Fair



On 13 December, the Year 13 BTEC Business class organised their annual Christmas Fair. This took place during both lunch periods and included many different fun activities such as a bake sale, face painting, photo booth and raffle. This event was held alongside Christmas Jumper Day, allowing students to come in and dress up in order to spread the Christmas spirit even more. Sixth Form students were allowed to dress up in Christmas themed outfits, with many fun different costumes created!

During the Christmas fair, there were many different stalls and activities raising a total of **£1,730 which will be donated to The Children's Catholic Society**. The event allowed students to join in the Christmas spirit and also created a really festive and positive atmosphere.

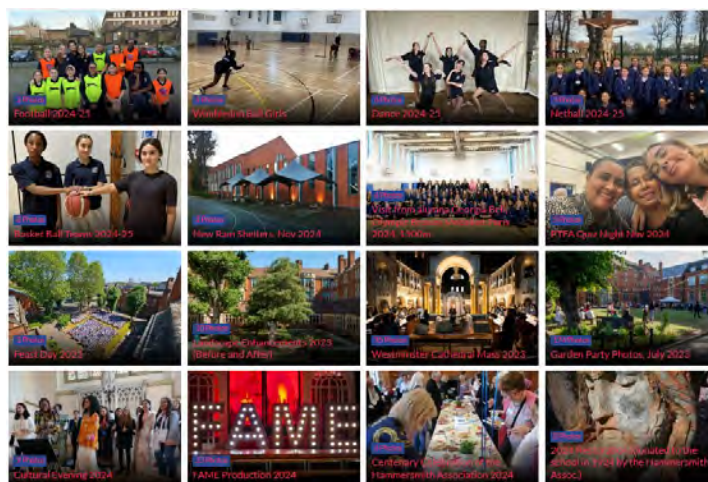
Many students were able to enjoy these activities and make long lasting memories with their friends and also capture them through the photo booth that was set up in the old gym! This fair also allowed students to come together and forget about any school work and instead focus on having fun.

A huge congratulations to Gadea F (8T) winning the raffle in first place, and Olivia S (7H) for coming in second and third!!! Additionally, congratulations to Ms Currey for winning the staff raffle, and for Diana S (13H) for winning best dressed!

The 2024 Christmas Fair left many fun memories for students and staff. It brought the Sacred Heart community in our school further together, and also allowed students to have a fun way to end this academic term.

The Year 13 BTEC Business class would like to thank all teachers, parents and students for contributing and participating in this event. We would not have been able to raise as much money as we did without you.

Update on Sacred Heart Connect



The school's new community platform sacredheartconnect.com is being very well used. The aim is to build community. Remember, just because you receive an email through the Connect system, this does not mean you are a member of Sacred Heart Connect. For that you need to [register](#). We currently have almost 550 members signed up to Connect.

Alumnae, parents and others within our community are setting up profiles and connecting with one another. Alumnae can also submit reflections to be included on the memories page.

There are now 19 galleries and we will add more as the year goes by. Galleries are only viewable to those who have registered and been approved by the school as a member of our community.

The Connect platform enables those outside the school to make donations and offers a far superior system than we have had in the past to manage fundraising across the board. This includes monies raised by the school through one off donations and regular giving, as well monies raised by our wonderful PTFA.

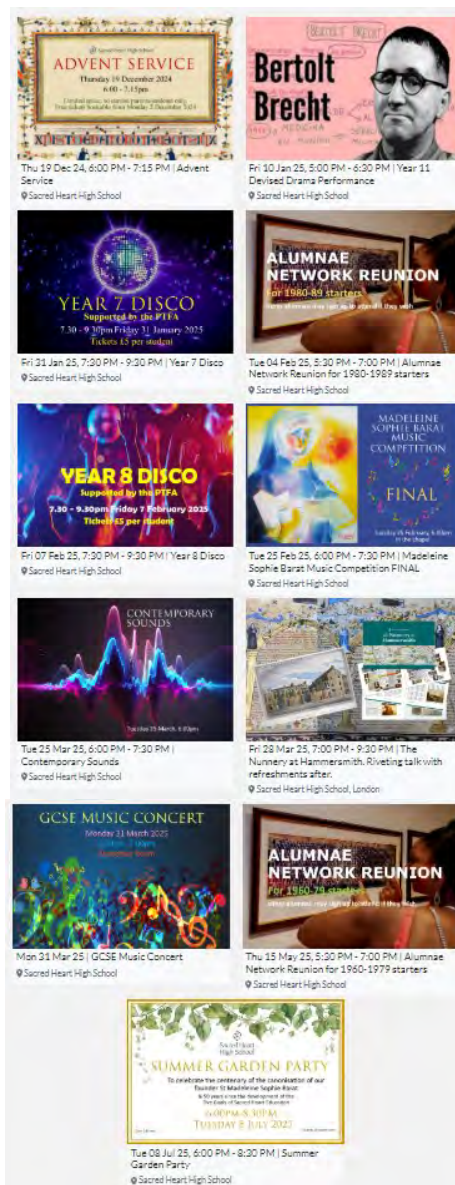
Fundraising is critical for the school, as it helps us provide a world-class education for your daughters. We will provide an impact report to parents and others across the community, at the end of the academic year.

We have so far achieved annualised donations through Connect for Regular Giving in excess of £28,000 in addition to those still giving through their bank standing orders. Of the £28,000, over £16,000 is from parents who have not donated previously.

We encourage all parents with bank standing orders to please change these over to regular giving through the 'Go Cardless' form on Connect.

Fundraising for our (Stage 2) cloister painting project now exceeds £6,000. This total has been raised entirely through the Historical Evenings, and donations made to the school after these events, and from sales of the Nunnery at Hammersmith book. We are repeating the talk again on 28 March and will also use ticket sales for our Garden Party on 8 July to contribute to the restoration fund.

The PTFA have outdone themselves this term with their Christmas raffle and auction raising well over £5,000.





THE SUNDAY TIMES

Sunday Times Parent Power Guide



Sacred Heart High School, Hammersmith

Comprehensive

National rank

225 = **288** =
Rank last year

58% A-level

49.2% GCSE

Need to know

Head teacher	Gender of entry	Total pupils
Sharon O'Donovan	Girls	1,135

Progress 8

WELL ABOVE AVERAGE

Pupils on free school meals

15.0%

[Our methodology >](#)

Results

A-level 2024 rank: 283=

GCSE 2024 rank: 159

The Sunday Times Parent Power Guide ranks the 1000 highest-achieving, most academically successful schools in the UK each year, based on the most recent public examination results across state, grammar and independent sectors.

Sacred Heart High School has been included in *The Sunday Times* Schools Guide 2025, being part of the Top 400 state secondary schools in the whole country.

According to the Sunday Times editor:

*The most successful schools are not just chasing A*s, but creating all-round students ready for the 21st century.*

The newspaper also states that

single-sex girls' schools again dominate the very highest echelons of the league tables.

Music Tour to Paris 2024



Our Paris 2024 trip was an amazing experience for all of us. We set off from school at 7.00am on Thursday morning and arrived at our hotel in the afternoon. Thankfully, our evening meal was just a few minutes' walk away from our hotel at the Restaurant Hippopotamus Steakhouse, we really enjoyed a delicious meal there.

On our first full day, after breakfast, we left our hotel rather early for the busy day planned. Our first stop was a morning performance at *Maison de Retraite et de Gériatrie, Fondation de Rothschild*, a beautiful home for the elderly, where everyone was so appreciative and kind.

After that, we spent some time shopping at a French Westfields. Later, we had the chance to perform at L'église Sainte-Marie-Madeleine, which we absolutely adored, and we explored the surroundings. Then we headed to a restaurant in central Paris before heading back to our hotel.

On the Saturday, we spent the day sightseeing and shopping (our favourite pastime!). We started with a boat trip along the River Seine; then visited iconic landmarks including Le Louvre and the Eiffel Tower, which we climbed on foot - some even managed to reach the second tier.

We also had the incredible opportunity to see Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat, the foundress of our school. It was extraordinary to witness her in real life. She was laid in a clear casket, at the Église Saint-François-Xavier and her face and hands were preserved in wax. It felt strange to be in her presence, especially knowing we were standing at the heart of where she spent many years, and quite near to her home town, in Joigny. It was

a very special moment for many of us as it made us feel connected to something much larger than ourselves.

Finally, it was Disney Day, though sadly our last full day. We were so excited for the day that Ms. Neckles' warning - that if we didn't behave throughout the trip, we'd have to sit on a bench in the park while everyone else had fun - really worked! We even went to bed early, kept out of trouble, and made sure to tidy up after breakfast. We set off bright and early and hopped on the coach. Disneyland was an incredible day! We got to see the amazing pink Disney castle and went on several exciting and thrilling rides. Many of us also ended up buying most of our souvenirs in the Disney shops, for our friends, family, and of course, ourselves!!

Overall, our trip was truly magical - an enchanting experience that we are all never going to forget. It gave us the chance to bond as a choir and musicians, and we can honestly say, that we made lasting memories and friendships. The trip was so much fun, and even the time spent on the coach, which was quite a lot, provided lots of laughs.

We are extremely grateful for this opportunity and fantastic music tour, as we enjoyed every moment of it.

We wish to extend a massive thank you to all the teachers who gave up part of their half-term break to make this trip possible, because without their dedication and willingness to do so, this trip would not have happened. So, we want to extend a massive THANK YOU to Ms. Neckles, Ms. Key, Ms. Mallon, Ms. Kennedy, and Mr. Granger. We are so grateful!

Music Tour, Paris 2024



A bit of fun - A Chemistree!

created by our Year 13 chemists for Christmas.



Ice Skating



Sixth Form

We all took a break from our busy sixth form life on 21 November and headed to Battersea Power Station for some ice skating. It was such a fun day out, spending time with friends, laughing at our attempts to stay on our feet, and soaking up the festive vibes.

The atmosphere was amazing, with all the lights and buzz around the Power Station. It was just what we needed to unwind and make some great memories together!

Scarlett M



Year 10



Year 10 enjoyed a much-anticipated Christmas treat in the form of an ice-skating trip to Westfield last week. The girls showed off their spectacular skating abilities - even those who took frequent tumbles!

The girls certainly showed up the members of staff present, who were very impressed both by the girls' abilities and the teamwork they demonstrated on the rink.

This trip was made possible by the generosity of the PTFA and we as a year group would like to extend our gratitude for this.



Healthy Relationships Champion School

RE:SET Award, London Mayor's project

We are delighted to announce that we have been awarded the status of being a Healthy Relationships Champion School. This acknowledges our work relationship education.



The RE-SET (Relationships Education: School's Equality Toolkit) Programme 'believes that the best relationships education comes from the whole school working in partnership to champion healthy relationships and prevent gender-based violence'

As part of the programme, RE:SET supports our pupils to learn safely, thrive as individuals and create future communities committed to respectful and equal relationships.

We are proud to announce that our RE-SET ambassadors have completed their training and are now sharing what they have learnt across the school - in 'form time' across different year groups and through the bespoke displays they have created. They will continue their work through future projects into the new year.

Well Done!



Sixth Form Physicists visit The Royal Observatory, Greenwich



On Tuesday 3 December, Year 12 and 13 Physics students had the incredible opportunity to visit the Royal Observatory in Greenwich. The trip was both educational and thrilling, as the students explored the planetarium, which deepened their understanding of the Solar System, our galaxy, and the vast universe beyond what they have studied in the classroom. The students were especially excited to stand on the Prime Meridian Line, a significant geographical landmark, and immerse themselves further into the fascinating world of astrophysics. It was an experience that sparked curiosity and a deeper appreciation for the wonders of space.

The trip was incredibly informative and it was nice to see all the different equipment astrologists used back in the day as well as learning the history behind some of that equipment. The Planetarium show dark room was extremely cool to be in, watching all the different visuals and learning some of the things associated with our galaxy was an interesting experience. *Nokuthaba C, Y12*

I really enjoyed the visit to The Royal Observatory. It was indeed an educational and memorable experience for me. The things we learned about astronomy really excited me. If I actually say about my feelings, after coming back from this trip I realised why I took physics. It motivated me to work hard again on my dreams. Thank you so much for this amazing experience. *Manmeet K, Y12*



Going to the Royal Observatory was a unique experience. We got to see the cross between the eastern and western hemispheres by walking over a singular line. Getting to go to a place that holds a lot of importance and getting to be next to different important things like the prime meridian felt very inspiring. My favourite part was being able to find my home country on the list of time zones relating to Greenwich. *Maxine M Y12*



Airy's meridian line

George Biddell Airy, seventh Astronomer Royal, commissioned the enormous telescope that still defines the Prime Meridian and is situated in the building ahead of you. Observations made here were used by cartographers, surveyors, navigators and astronomers. By 1884 most ships were using charts based on this meridian line. Since that year it has been the baseline for world time.

◀ You are now standing on the Prime Meridian of the world, as defined by Airy's telescope and agreed by international convention in 1884.

Astronomers worked in pairs on the Airy Transit Circle: one looked through the eyepiece while the other observed the microscope readings on the stone disc.



Yule Ball Comes to Sacred Heart Harry Potter Club Christmas Party

The Harry Potter club celebrated the end of the first term at Hogwarts (SHHS branch) with an amazing Christmas party. There were Harry Potter-themed treats such as delicious Golden Snitches (thank you Rose's mum!), chocolate kisses for each Hogwarts house (thanks Tayla-Rae) and a host of other goodies.

Y9 House Captains Xenia and Michaela then led a brilliant quiz with rounds including: guess the Harry Potter character from a very close-up picture; is this a quote from Harry Potter or not?; complete the line from Harry Potter; and Pottergrams (Harry Potter anagrams). The final round was a spectacular murder mystery.

Perhaps you would like to have a go at solving it yourselves?

Shock horror! Gryffindor brainbox Hermione Grainger has been found dead in the bathroom at Hogwarts - she has been murdered! But who could have carried out this awful deed? One clue remains - clutched in the palm of her hand was a crumpled note which read:

"Don't repair a cat or malignant alligator, lest fear overcome you. Kissing is lovely lamentation, eagerly distinguishing macabre eyes."

The three prime suspects are:

- **Draco Malfoy** - sworn enemy of all Gryffindors.
- **Moaning Myrtle** - resident ghost of the Hogwarts bathroom
- **Professor Dumbledore** - venerable headmaster who discovered Hermione's body

Can you work out which of these suspects was the murderer? The clues are all there - if you look very closely.

Thanks to all of the girls for making the Harry Potter club such brilliant fun this term and to the House Captains for preparing such a fantastic quiz. Oh, and I forgot to mention, the winner of this year's Christmas quiz was... Hufflepuff!

Mr H Williams



The Tempest

Review by Iris M, Y7.



What play did you see and who performed it?

We watched *The Tempest*, a play written by William Shakespeare. It was performed by the creative team of actors from the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts.

What did you think of the performance?

I think the performance was lengthy, yet interesting and captivating. I did not understand some parts of the play since I was not familiar with it. However, thanks to the actors' fantastic acting skills, I was able to understand most of the story.

What was your favourite part / character?

My favourite part of the play was the beginning. There was a lot of singing, and all the characters came together. It was similar to a musical. The character who stood out the most, therefore I really liked, was Ariel, an angel dressed in white.

What happened in the class workshop?

In the class workshop, we did a variety of group activities, including a freeze-frame game. On top of that, we had a discussion about the performance as well.

What did you get out of this experience?

Through this experience, I realised how fun and cool acting is, even though plays can sometimes be long.

Year 12 Geographers' Tectonics Conference

By Maryam H, Laiza L and Chloe W



On 4 December, we attended an explosive tectonics conference, sharpening our minds on earthquakes, tsunamis and volcanoes. Throughout the talk, we were able to gain a deeper understanding of our A-Level curriculum, specifically case studies linked to tectonics.

We were especially interested in the recent Icelandic eruptions: Fagradalsfjall (2021-23) + Sundhnukar (2023-24). It was interesting to learn the innovative and sustainable lava defence barriers which protect key infrastructure like the Blue Lagoon Spa, Svartsengi Power Station and the International Airport at Keflavik.

The talk also provided us with an insight on future possible careers after meeting a geophysicist who informed us about interesting new ways to measure earthquakes.

She highlighted how she maximised all her skills, which guided her to her current career path. Overall, we especially enjoyed learning about tsunamis as this year marked the 20th Anniversary of the Boxing Day Tsunami, the most catastrophic tectonic event to date.



Feedback about life at Sacred Heart from some of our new Year 7's

My first term at Sacred Heart has flown by, and I can hardly believe how much I've experienced in such a short space of time. When school first started, my biggest fear was getting lost in such a big building. But as time went on, I quickly got the hang of things and now feel right at home!

One class that stands out for me is drama because it's something I'm passionate about outside of school as well. Being able to continue learning about it here has been amazing! Not only that, but all of the extracurricular clubs have been so much fun too. It's great to be able to participate in activities with my friends and try new things together.

Assemblies and PSHE are also highlights for me because they're both exciting and thoughtful. They give us a chance to reflect on important topics while still being engaging and enjoyable. Another aspect that makes me love this school is receiving achievement points. It always brightens up my day when I earn them! This term has truly been an incredible start to this new chapter in my life, filled with countless memories that will last a lifetime.

But what makes Sacred Heart truly special is the opportunity it provides for making new connections and forming meaningful friendships. My daily school experience would not be complete without the amazing connections I have built with my classmates. I just can't wait for what else secondary school holds for me!

Mirabella 7H



Our names are Katharina and Mia and we are in 7S. We are really enjoying our time at Sacred Heart and our favourite subjects are Drama and DT. Our experience of transition to secondary school has been tricky at times but with the right support and techniques we have managed. The school itself is very big but everything is easy to learn once you get the hang of it. Every lesson will vary but they are all fun and exciting.

Try not to mix up real life with the movies you have watched, because in real life teachers aren't as strict as long as you do the work. We have been attending a wide range of clubs from singing, dancing and acting to football, netball and basketball. We love attending all the clubs the school has on offer to us.

Overall, we are really enjoying Y7 and know that extra support is on offer to us in the Erskine centre if we need it.

Katharina & Mia 7S

Before I started at Sacred Heart, I was extremely nervous about high school and whether or not I would like my teachers, make friends and be able to find my classes. Thankfully, my teachers were always there to guide and support me through this transition. I can speak on behalf of all pupils at Sacred Heart when I say I truly love the atmosphere and opportunities the school provides, especially the fascinating experiments in Science, the engrossing stories we are reading in English, the exciting Drama lessons and the incredible sounds we are making in Music.

I have settled in very well so far, taking part in multiple after school and bonding activities such as Netball, Choir, Glee Club and Dance Company, which have helped me to make new friends and to have a positive start to this seemingly scary transition to secondary school. The thought of being the youngest year group compared to the oldest originally had me feeling anxious, but pupils in the older years have been nothing but helpful, offering advice and always being considerate.

I am looking forward to my future years at Sacred Heart with excitement, at the memories I will make and the friendships I will forge.

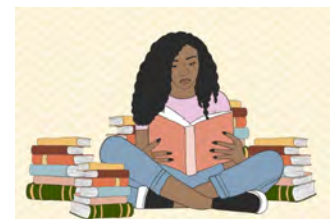
Tallulah, 7A



Friendship



Personal Social Health Education



Friends
FOREVER

The Library Remembrance Day



We also held a writing competition focusing on the role that women played during the Second World War, enabling pupils to recognise their significance.

Writing Competition winner:

I can help too

by Sophia P (Year 10)

My husband went off to war. He was going to fly a fighter plane. I couldn't stand leaving him, so I went with him. I cut my hair so it'd look more manly and kept my face covered. They accepted me and took me down as Oliver Beckett, not too far off from my real name, Olivia. We trained in the same group and then we were off to fight for real - no second chances: life or death. I kissed him goodbye for what I hoped wasn't the last time. I started re-thinking my choice.

But it was too late now. I got into the cockpit and flew off. For a while, it was quiet. Then, the BANG-BANG-BANG-BANG startled me so much that my plane tipped. Hurriedly straightening it, I frantically scanned for where the sound came from. Then, I noticed it: the Nazi planes. I took aim. I was one of the best in my group at aiming because I didn't shoot ten times in the general direction: I waited for the opportune moment, aimed where it would affect the plane the most, then fired.

The sound started me again, but I knew it was coming. The plane I shot fell to the floor as if it were no more than a dysfunctional paper plane.

I gave myself a millisecond to celebrate, then I moved onto my next target. And the next. And the next. I only missed once.

Glancing in my rear view mirror, I saw an enemy plane approaching me from behind. The cheek of them! Attacking from behind.

I swooped suddenly downwards as if I had been shot down, then flew up from behind the plane.

Two can play at that game.

I took aim and shot it down.

But I heard a different crash and felt a massive judder.

Someone else hit me.

As my eyes darted around, I saw that the plane had been behind me.

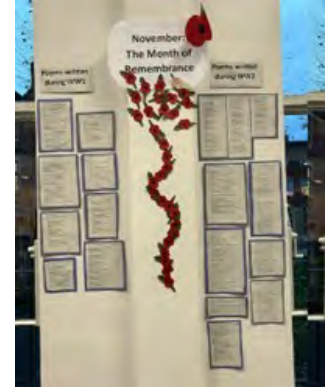
I grappled with my controls and tried to steady my plane, but it was dropping down, down, down, and I couldn't stop it.

My last thoughts before I hit the ground were "Adam, I love you."

In November, we celebrated Remembrance Day. With a strong feeling of gratitude to those who have passed, the Library ran a workshop for all pupils which gave them the opportunity to write letters to World War II veterans who are still with us today.

Students' letters were posted to the *The Not Forgotten* organisation, which confirmed that their letters had successfully been delivered to the veterans.

During this letter writing workshop, we stuck poppies on our library Remembrance Day display wall, alongside notable poems from the First and Second World Wars.



Year 12 English students attended a Writing Development Workshop at the British Library



The Klencke Atlas, above and below. This was the largest atlas in the world until 2012. It was presented to King Charles II in 1660 after his restoration to the throne following the English Civil War. The atlas contains 41 large wall maps in an ornate binding that bears the symbols of the Kingdoms of Great Britain and France. Together these maps were considered to encapsulate the entire knowledge of the world.



Students with Kate Worsley, novelist and fellow of the Royal Literary Fund.



Photos above and below from the British Library website to show better show the scale of the atlas.

On Tuesday 17 December all the English A Level students went to a writing workshop at the British Library. Novelist and Royal Literary Fund Fellow Kate Worsley ran the workshop which covered identifying different styles of writing and how to plan, structure and write a successful academic essay. She also discussed building a critical argument, writing to a deadline and emphasised the necessity of proofreading before handing work in. It was a practical workshop, involving a lot of writing and editing and sharing our knowledge.

The day also included a tour of the British Library – a particular highlight was the Treasures Room where we saw the earliest edition of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* and Shakespeare's *Folio*. We also went into one of the Reading Rooms of the British Library and were able to take a photograph, outside the largest atlas in the world (before 2012) presented to Charles II in 1660 after his restoration to the throne following the Civil War.

The day was informative, entertaining and an excellent way of reinforcing and building on critical essay writing and course-work skills so essential for A Level English.



Sacred Heart Inspire Talks

Sacred Heart Inspire Talks Welcomes...



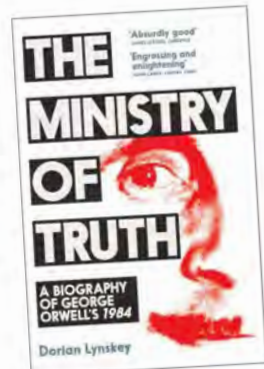
Dorian Lynskey

Date - Thursday 12th December

Time - 3.00pm till 4.00pm

Venue - the Library

Dorian Lynskey, podcaster, journalist and author of non-fiction books such as *The Ministry of Truth: A Biography of Orwell's 1984* and *33 Revolutions per Minute: A History of Protest Songs* will be joining us at SHHS to talk about George Orwell and the writing of 1984. This should be of great interest to all students of English Literature, History and Politics or anyone else with an interest in the media, journalism and writing in general. Lynskey is the co-presenter of the podcast series *Origin Story* which seeks to unpack the meanings of commonly used but often misunderstood concepts such as Woke, Conspiracy Theory and Freedom of Speech. He also contributes to the current affairs podcast *Oh God, What Now?* It should be a very interesting and thought-provoking discussion. Open to Y11, Y12 and Y13. Compulsory for English Lit Dystopia students.



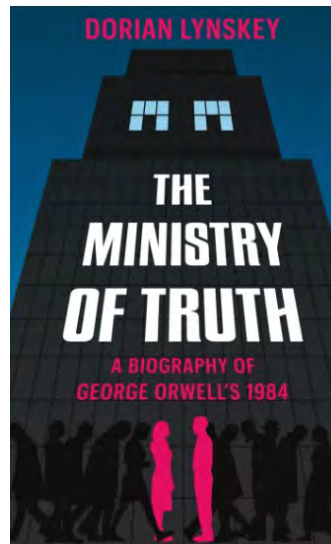
On Thursday 12 December 2024, the author and renowned journalist Dorian Lynskey came to talk to Years 11, 12 and 13. Dorian shared his range of views on George Orwell and the book 1984. He was asked an array of questions from students and teachers, one of which was why he chose to spend his career delving into authors such as George Orwell.

In response, Dorian explained his passion for the dystopian genre and the fact that he found Orwell's work fascinating as it has a variety of topics you can explore.

While talking about George Orwell, he was very relaxed and it was evidently clear that he enjoys speaking about his work and views on the subject. In the talk, Dorian described Orwell's life and how it is a representation of Orwell himself.

He brought to our attention how Orwell was the first person to create the genre of dystopia or at least to put it into a novel format. Dorian mentioned how he is interested in the hope of a book and the idea that we might never fully understand a book. I personally enjoyed the talk and I feel like my peers would say the same.

By Malia F-P



Life Beyond School Conference at St Catherine's School

ST CATHERINE'S SCHOOL
TWICKENHAM

PRESENTS:
LIFE BEYOND SCHOOL
13 NOVEMBER 2024
0930-1545

WORKSHOPS FROM:

Dr Kinjal Patel
WOMEN'S HEALTH Q&A

Libby Flenley
FOUNDER, THE SEX, LIES AND LOVE PROJECT

Deana Puccio
CO-FOUNDER, THE RAP PROJECT

SPECIAL GUESTS:

Caitlin Fawkes
DEPUTY HEAD OF COUNTER TERRORISM

Priya Lakhani
FOUNDER, CENTURY TECH

SCHOOLS ATTENDING:

Gumley House School
Marymount International School, London
St Augustine Priory, Ealing
St Catherine's, Twickenham
Sacred Heart, Hammersmith
Notre Dame School, Cobham

On 13 November 2024, our Year 12 students had the privilege of joining other Year 12 students from girls' Catholic schools (Marymount International, Gumley House, St Augustine's Priory and Notre Dame School) at an inspiring conference hosted by Saint Catherine's School in Twickenham.

Five successful women addressed and delivered workshops to approximately 250 students over the day, covering topics to help us prepare for 'life beyond school'. Their delivery was engaging and relevant with areas such as women's health, coercion, relationships and how to stay safe, as well as how to succeed in the 21st century world of work.

Speakers included Caitlin Fawkes, Deputy Head of Counter Terrorism UK, Priya Lakhani, Founder of Century Tech, Dr Kinjal Patel who specialises in women's health, Libby Flenley, Founder of The Sex, Lies and Love Project and Deana Puccio, Co-founder of the RAP Project.

We are very grateful to Mr Stringer, Head of Sixth Form at St Catherine's, as well as Mrs McPherson, Headmistress, for hosting us so generously and we look forward to future collaborations.



The Library



The Michaelmas Term has been extremely busy for the library, with lots of new initiatives and activities, as well as many continued drives and extra-curricular activities.

As annually, we began the term with Year 7 and Year 12 library inductions. Year 7 pupils were introduced to the library and received one free Bookbuzz book of their choice, encouraging them to read many books in high school and providing them with a warm welcome to a wider reading community. The Year 12 pupils received a workshop on finding academic resources and referencing them in their respective coursework and essays, helping to introduce them to the demands of the A-level course and its various examinations.

Year 12 pupils continued to play an active role in the life of the library, with many becoming Reading Buddies for Year 7 and Year 8 students, who benefitted from the mentoring of older students every Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday morning.

Form groups also continued reading their designated books during morning registration, collectively making the time and space to facilitate reading in their schedules.

Year 10 pupils in particular were encouraged to continue reading throughout their GCSE studies through the Six Book Challenge, whereby they were tasked with the objective of reading six books between October and February half term. For every six books that pupils read, they were awarded with a raffle ticket to potentially win a prize at the end of the February half term. Library clubs such as Story Writing Club and Magazine Club continued to thrive, with regular weekly meetings on Tuesdays and Thursdays after school, and the launching of two fantastic Autumn and Winter school magazine issues.

On top of our existing initiatives, the Library introduced many new drives to promote and encourage reading and engagement in literature across all year groups. Primarily, many new fiction and non-fiction titles were added to our already wonderful collection. These books were purchased from our usual book provider as well as from an exciting new collaboration with Laburnum House Educational. They were of different genres, aiming to appeal to both younger and older pupils and quickly disappeared from shelves after being put on display in batches.

The library has also been decorated with new displays such as our colourful 'recommended reads' display targeted at specific year groups, and huge posters were put up containing approachable but eloquent poems. Additionally, the library has introduced an interactive board on which students were invited to write down what their current favourite book is and why. Many students also filled in drawn book spines on A3 documents signifying what they are currently reading. These documents were all quickly put on display.

In order to encourage participation and involvement in literature for students who do not spend much time in the Library, there have been film screenings of *The Dead Poet's Society* and *A Muppet Christmas Carol*. There is also a new 'anonymous writers' box in the library, which gives pupils who do not want to participate in competitions or do not want to be recognised for their work an opportunity to give writing a go without the worry of being displayed or assessed.



The Library (continued)

Outside of the library, A3 posters have been hung up around year group specific corridors. These posters contain reading recommendations for specific year groups, and were designed to display eye-catching and encouraging titles. Students were also continually reminded of the fact that teachers are keen readers too, through posters on teacher doors informing them which book a teacher is currently reading.

In order to further support teachers in encouraging reading and making it accessible, we have started running short starter activities during library lessons. These include reading part of the news from The Day resource and discussing how it may be relevant to the texts that pupils study as a class or books they read in their own time. Reading short news stories at the beginning of library lessons also aimed to emphasise the importance of understanding the world outside of the classroom.

Competitions

In addition to all initiatives, drives, and fun extra-curricular activities, the library facilitated many other school-wide competitions.

On top of the internal **National Poetry Day and Remembrance Day contests** (see pages 19 and 26 to 28), the library participated in national creative writing competitions designed for secondary schools in England.

The Beautiful Truth was one of these competitions, challenging pupils across the country to write a poem on a theme that mattered to them for a chance to be published in a Young Writers poetry anthology.

Impressively, 22 pupils from our school have succeeded with flying colours and will be published poets by next year.

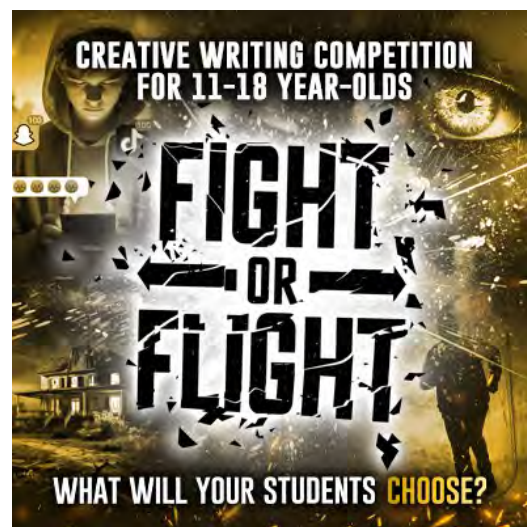
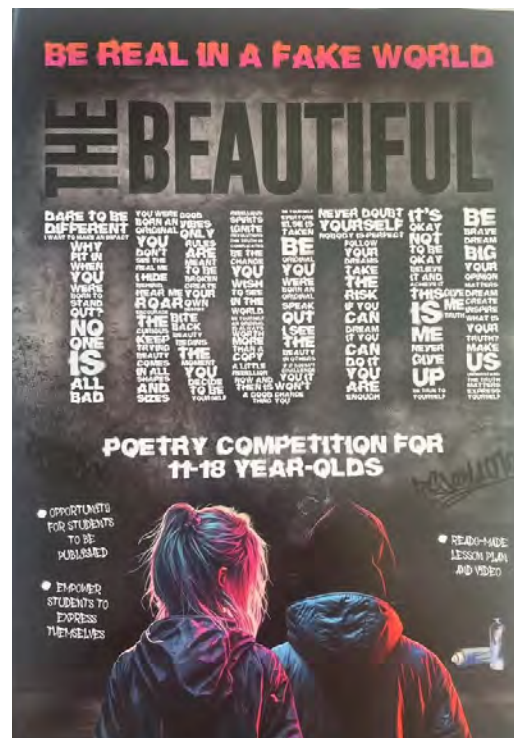
Fight or Flight was another national competition in which we took part, challenging students to write a mini saga about a moment of decision-making in a high-pressure situation. Many students have submitted their responses, and we are waiting for the results.

Similarly, sixth form students attended workshops in the library for the **Tower Poetry Competition 'Roots' facilitated by the University of Oxford**. As this is one of the most prestigious poetry competitions for young adults (16-18 year olds) in the UK, the library held workshop sessions for students to go through the competition's demands and discuss this year's theme. So far, we have had very promising ideas.

We look forward to all the things that are to come next year.

Thank you to all the fantastic library volunteers who have worked hard to help upkeep the organisation and visual presentation of the library. Thank you also to the newly appointed Senior LRC ambassadors, we look forward to working with you more next term.

Ms Spek, Librarian



Year 7 Poetry Competition winners

Year 12 & 13 Politics students visit to Parliament

Year 12 and 13 Politics students visited Parliament on Thursday 12 December. Students took part in a workshop where they came up with their own political parties and manifestos. They also took a tour of Parliament and listened in on a debate in the Commons.



Sophie Raworth



Last week, we were delighted to be joined at SHHS by top BBC journalist and presenter of the Nine O'clock News, Sophie Raworth. Sophie spoke to Year 12, Year 13 and selected members of Y11 about her amazing career and what it is like to be one of the nation's most recognised faces.

She had recorded a video especially for Sacred Heart students, from behind the scenes at the previous evening's 10 O'Clock News and she shared many interesting stories and insights from her many experiences, including broadcasting at important national events such as the Queens' funeral and the King's coronation.

Many students asked thoughtful and probing questions about the media, the difficulty of editorial choices and how to fact check stories appropriately before broadcasting.

We are very thankful to Sophie for sharing her time and expertise with us and to Mr Munro Davies for organising the talk.

The Library National Poetry Day

The Michaelmas term was a time of many important dates. On 1 October, we celebrated National Poetry Day.

In order to create a community around reading and show that many members of our school community read poetry, we created a huge 'SHHS's favourite poems' display and placed it in the cloisters. The display consisted of staff and student favourite poems, showcasing that poetry is enjoyed by our school community.

To familiarise younger year groups with poetry, the Library screened poetry readings during lunch, giving pupils the opportunity to engage in poetry in a way that is different from looking at it on the page.

Leading up to the day, we also held a school-wide poetry competition on the theme of 'change', which received a large number of impressive entries and one winner was picked from each year group:



Change is scary but good

by Olivia B, Year 7

Listening to the sounds of your heart thumping
Thump, thump, thumping
Wondering what is to come of me
Looking out to the new sights to see

Listen to the sound of the busy people stomping
Stomp, shout, stomp
Look out you tell yourself
It's too late you're already in the building

Listen to the sound of leaves rustling
Rustle, rustle, rustling
I wonder oh wonder what a strange sight I will see
The door finally opens and there you have it!

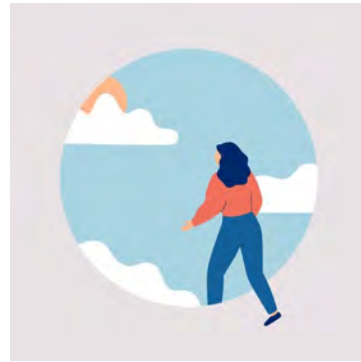
Listen to the sound of the bell ringing
Ring, I'm late, ring
As I walk through the never ending hallway
I look to see I'm part of the team

Listen to the sound of your friends chatting
Chat, OMG, LOL
Thinking how did I ever fit in
But only I know that secret....



Change

by Nia F-A, Year 8



Remember who I am now and not who I was then;
Beaten down and down by you in a tempest of lies,
Risen from the trenches you put me in with a new peace of mind.
Turn your back on me now seeing what I've become,
I'm a supernova of passion, radiating confidence with every step in my path.

The tenderness of my heart,
How my mind sparks with curiosity,
The girl who once wept with the touch of Midas
Is now set everfree.

A sudden weight that comes off my shoulders leaving me sighing in relief,
That's the change that's happened away from your aura of negativity.

The Untold Stories I have yet to share
From everything in me I had yet to bear.
A new year, A new me,
It's my turn to change others,
My personal experience to help them believe.

Did I make you enlightened when you'd pick on me?
Season to season, week on week,
The change in the atmosphere provokes you to trample on the weak.
If I can change myself, why can't you?
Is negativity all you feed on after reading the room?
The click of my heels and the sound of my voice
Makes others change to have an uplifting sense of choice.

As time ticks endlessly on a clock,
Its hands move effortlessly on the dot.
An inanimate object so symbolic yet ordinary,
Never set boundaries on what time it is to do something extraordinary.
The sound of your voice once echoing in my head,
Now it's gone, Why?
I chose to change instead.

National Poetry Day: Competition Winners, continued.



'Ode to Change'

by Florence M, Year 9

A constant dance, a shifting tide,
A force unseen, where shadows hide.
Change, a sculptor, moulding clay,
Shaping lives in every way.

From dawn to dusk, it weaves its art,
A tapestry of every heart.
A bitter pill, a sweet surprise,
It tests us all, it makes us wise.

Though fear may creep, and doubts may linger,
Change is the wind that makes us stronger.
It's in the seasons, in the night,
A guiding star, a guiding light.

It sweeps us onward, ever so fleet,
Through valleys deep and mountain peaks sweet.
A teacher stern, a gentle friend,
A journey's end, without an end.
So let us embrace, with open arms,
The twists and turns, the new alarms.
For in the heart of every change,
A chance for growth, a chance to range.



Marigold

by Milan W, Year 12

Change comes softly like a sigh,
beneath a quiet, endless sky.
It moves in whispers, unseen threads,
that weave through all our dreams and dreads.

The flower fades, and blossom falls,
a voice once near no longer calls.
Yet in the space that loss has made,
New buds will bloom where light once strayed.

We cling to moments, hold them tight,
Afraid to lose them in the night.
But life renews in all its ways,
and what is gone in time replays.

So let the rivers shift and flow,
for in each end, a start will grow.
The world is wide its song is true
And all that changes, changes you.



Change

by Tessa H, Year 10

Change, a concept good or bad
It can make you happy or make you sad
Night into day, day into night
The change in colour from black and white
The change when you find out the truth about someone
The change in your family after the death of a loved one
All was good before you said goodbye
Now I look up wondering if you're in the sky
But I know you're six feet under lying in the dirt
I sit at your grave, crying, hurt
Change, a concept good or bad
Now I look back at all those memories we have
or we had

Growing up

by Katie-May Q, Year 13

From playground brawls to shopping malls,
To grief from worlds of fun.
Slow it down, I'm crying out,
Too fast I have to run.

Goodbye to mess hello to stress,
Wow, how time has flown.
I see your face, but no embrace,
Look at how we've grown.

Tomorrow I'll wake, with a tearstained face,
But I can't change the way it goes.
I'll kick and scream, and tears will stream,
To wash away my woes.

It may seem strange how much we've changed,
But wait, it's not all gone.
The same laugh, same smile,
But I'll cry for a while,

About growing up,
The world's greatest con.



National Poetry Day Internal Competition Winners, continued

Bridges we forgot to mend

by Jilianne S S, Year 11

We built bridges out of laughter,
Small, careless things at first,
Flung across the space between us.
Do you remember that?
How we swore they'd never break,
That the sky itself could fall,
And still, we'd stand—
Together.
We said that like it meant something,
Like we understood time
And the weight it carries on its back.

But time does not walk lightly.

One day, the bridge cracked.
Not enough to see at first,
Just a faint tremor beneath our feet—
I smiled at you, you smiled back.
We pretended not to feel it.
A word broke loose,
A word too sharp for us to catch,
And it fell between us like a stone in water,
Sinking to the bottom, forgotten but not gone.

Then the distance grew like a living thing,
Its roots winding through our silence,
Our hands still outstretched but never touching.
I thought about calling your name,
But what if you didn't turn around?
I wasn't ready for that.
You weren't either.
So we let the days pass,
Each one carrying us a little further,
Until the bridge was more shadow than solid ground.

I told myself it was fine.
People drift, right?
That's what they do.
The wind pulls at us, and we go,
We bend, we stretch—
Until one of us snaps.

I snapped.

Do you know what it's like to scream
Into the void where a friend used to be?
To throw every word you have
And watch them spiral,
Watch them crumble before they reach the other
side?
It's like breaking in slow motion.
It's like feeling every splinter
But knowing there's no stopping it now.
I wanted to hold on—
I swear I did—
But you were already gone,
And I was just standing there,

Empty hands clinging to air.

I hated you for leaving.

But then—
Then, just when I thought the wind would tear me
apart too -
I remembered that first bridge,
The one we built without thinking.
Maybe it wasn't as strong as we thought,
But it existed once,
And maybe that's enough.

Maybe the breaking is how we learn to build
better.

So now, I stand here,
On this side of whatever we've become,
And I think of you.
And I still miss you—
I really do miss you.
But I also know this:
We both deserve the chance to walk on new
ground.

Maybe someday,
We'll build again.
Or maybe we won't.
But either way,
I'm learning to walk on my own,
Learning that sometimes,
The fall is what teaches you
How to rise.





Natural History Club, Year 7

Hello, my name is Maia and I am in Year 7. I will be telling you about the club I go to which is called Natural History Club.

In Natural History Club (which is on a Tuesday) we always learn something new. I find it all so fascinating, even though some facts sound a little bit gross, but I find it cool.

We have learnt about bog bodies, which is when in the olden times people were sacrificed to their "God" and archaeologists discovered these bodies in the bog. The weird thing is that their skin feels like leather so they are very delicate.

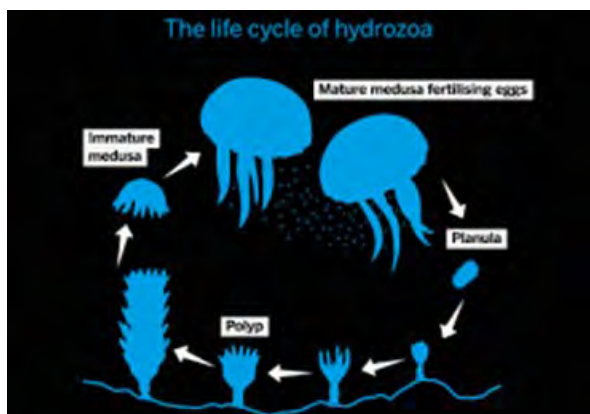
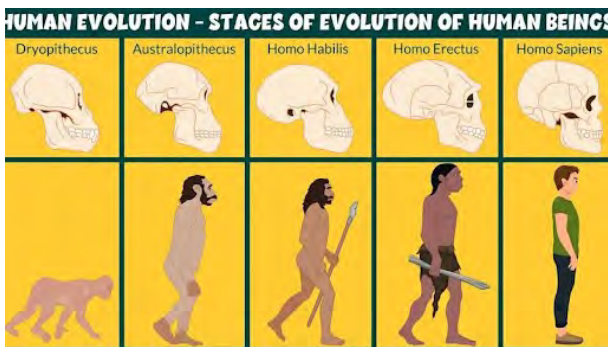
There are more things we have learnt about like the immortal jellyfish which comes back to life and multiplies when you kill it (so you cannot get rid of them). We have also learnt about the Devil's Punch Bowl and human evolution.

I love sharing all the facts that I have learnt, because the reactions when everyone hears them is so funny.

To finish off, a fun fact we have learnt is that babies are useless because they cannot defend themselves, unlike a kitten which will scratch you if feels threatened.

For those who want to know what I am talking about, here are some pictures and thank you so much for reading about what I have done in my club!!!

Maia ZH 7R





Natural History Club, Year 10

Natural History brings different year groups together and is extremely interesting. It helps us learn and discover a large variety of different topics, these may range from rocks and fossils, to ancient woodland, history of life on earth, and more.

We take part in a lot of interesting conversations and always have a good time no matter what it's about. I found the peak cavern most interesting as it is the largest natural cave entrance in the UK.

Theory and discussion underpins Natural History Club with an enigmatic examination of the world around us.

Sophia C, 10H



Peak Cavern



Sacred Heart High School

Celebrating the achievements of our 2024 Year 13 leavers now studying STEM/STEAM subjects at university.

University of Aberdeen

Keya – Psychology

University of Bath

Isabella – Computer Science

University of Brighton

Flora – Pharmacy

University of Bristol

Francesca – Environmental Geoscience

Brunel University

Scarlett – Psychology

University of East Anglia

Anabelle – Psychology

Heriot-Watt University

Laura – Psychology

University of Central Lancashire

Eline – Psychology of Child Development

Imperial College, London

Sonia – Medicine

University of London, King's College

Janessa – Computer Science



University of London, Queen Mary's

Lerica – Pharmaceutical Chemistry

University of London, Royal Holloway

Gabriela – Drama and Theatre Studies

University of the Arts, London

Chloe – Fashion Marketing

University of Leicester

Julia – Geology with Palaeontology

University of Manchester

Louise – Biosciences

University of Plymouth

Reham – Computer Science

University of Reading

Elizabeth – Accounting and Finance

University of Surrey

Darlene – Psychology

Emma – Criminology

'The past two years at Sacred Heart Sixth Form have been really amazing. The teachers have given us endless support. We have been given many opportunities to excel and go above and beyond to reach our full potential' Sonia AG, Imperial College, Medicine





It has been a very busy term for the Sacred Heart debaters who have gone from strength to strength. They have all participated in weekly debate clubs and at every level: Advanced British Parliamentary debating; Intermediate MACE debating and Beginner Debate Club.

There have been some astounding debates across the board, with our advanced debaters securing two wins at the St Paul's Girls' School Debate Competition and our Year 7 beginners team coming first at the Ealing Field's High School Competition.

On top of all of this, we have established a friendly debating league for our Y7-9 students with St Paul's Girls', Latymer Upper, and Putney High. The first competition was hosted in November and was a resounding success for all participants; special thanks to sixth form debaters who assisted in judging the competitions.

Below is a list of the competitions that students have participated in, there are already many more competitions lined up for the Spring Term so keep an eye out for further updates!

September

St Paul's Girls' School Open Women's Debate Competition – Special praise goes to Kamina (Y11) and Maame (Y10) who came first place in the Silver Final and Vhairi and Anushka, in Y10, who won the Novice Final.

October

Dulwich College Debate Competition, another successful debate for Anushka (Y10) and Emily M (Y11) broke to the Novice Final and came third overall.

Ealing Field's High School, very well done to our Y7 team who came first!

South Hampstead High School MACE competition.

November

The first friendly competition between St Paul's Girls', Latymer Upper, and Putney High hosted at Sacred Heart!

UCL Winter Cup – Excellent performances from all debaters.

LSE Schools Competition- a particularly challenging competition with fantastic speeches from all our debaters!

Senior Debate Shield hosted at Sacred Heart, well done to Ella and Milan in Y12 who came first and ensured that Sacred Heart champions for the second year in a row!



Ella G (Y12), Milan (Y12)



From left to right: Perpetua P (Y11), Emily M (Y11), Gabriella Q (Y11), Mariam T (Y11) at the South Hampstead High School Mace Competition

Women in Aeronautics, Imperial College workshop



The aeronautics trip was an incredibly inspirational experience that deepened my understanding of women in STEM and the profound impact they can have on the world. I particularly appreciated the opportunity to engage in group tasks and collaborative problem-solving during the workshops and lectures. Contributing ideas and working as part of a team not only enhanced my critical thinking but also fostered a sense of support and shared purpose. The university tour was another highlight of the trip, offering a glimpse into university life and the amount of possibilities it presents.

I was especially impressed by the university's high-tech features, which demonstrated that innovation knows no bounds and that with determination, anything is achievable. Listening to talks from professors and current university students was both insightful and motivating. Their stories about life after sixth form and the challenges and opportunities of pursuing higher education inspired me to envision my own academic and career journey. These discussions also gave me the confidence to believe that, with hard work and determination, I too can accomplish great things.

Sofia N

During Imperial College's Women in Aeronautics and Engineering workshop, we explored some engineering and mathematical concepts, including basic design principles and we learnt about the journeys of the students and their life at Imperial.

The day began with a tour of the campus, where we explored the state-of-the-art facilities and visited the Full Motion Flight Simulator which replicates real-world flight conditions, allowing pilots or students to experience realistic scenarios such as take-offs, landings, and turbulence in a controlled environment.

Afterwards, we sat through a very interactive and engaging lecture which explored some engineering and mathematical concepts, including basic design principles. Then, in smaller groups, we used basic materials and a small generator to construct turbines, experimenting with different blade shapes, angles, and configurations to optimise energy output.

It was a fascinating way to apply theoretical knowledge to a practical challenge, and the collaborative atmosphere made the experience even more engaging, allowing us to work on our problem-solving and teamwork skills. This was a very valuable and memorable experience and there's so much we took from the workshop, especially the students' talks about their academic journeys and application processes, and it was great to explore different fields within Engineering.

Tamina & Tara

This workshop has been inspirational and a really good experience which gives us an insight to the types of topics that we would do for aeronautical engineering. Since we both would like to take this course at university it has been a great opportunity to get a feel for university life.

We particularly enjoyed making wind turbines as we have expanded our knowledge about this topic which we are passionate about and it has helped us to develop a different point of view in physics as a whole. We now know the factors which help in making a successful aerofoil which are: angle of attack, thickness and camber. Furthermore, we looked at theoretical and experimental models and an overview of aeronautics including the key skills required to be successful in the course.

Overall, this workshop has been an incredible and fun experience, and we are grateful for everything that the volunteers have taught us.

Paola and Olivia.

The several lectures and workshops we did during our visit were all led by Clarizze Cuntapay. While most of these were heavily based on aeronautics, planes, and turbines, we also got to learn ideas presented in other fields of engineering (and just engineering in general), such as theoretical/experimental models and "fitting" a mathematical model (a line graph) to the data you take post-experiment.

In our aeronautics workshop, we learnt about aerofoils (the cross-section of a plane wing) and their features, such as the angle of attack, thickness and camber line. After learning about these, we got 20 minutes to make our own turbines out of cardboard and learnt that specific shapes and curves in a turbine blade can determine how well they'll work.

Claribelle C

I personally found the aeronautics trip very interesting since it opened my eyes to future career and study opportunities within physics. We learned mathematical skills and theory behind aircraft design which I found extremely fascinating. For the practical aspect we designed wind turbines. I found it so fun to work in a group and use the skills we had just learnt. Overall, it was a great experience that I would love to do again.

Sophie A

KS3 STEAM Taster Session

The STEAM Taster session was a success with loads of children enjoying the festive tasks as Christmas is just around the corner. We started with a round of lottery as children eagerly picked their two lucky numbers with the hope that someone might actually win a prize. After we chose our numbers, it was announced that the winning numbers would be called at the very end of the show.

We moved on to a mathematical trick where we got to guess the date of someone's birthday. It took us some time to figure out how the trick worked but we soon got the gist of it. I would have to say that the part where we got to fold pictures and cut with one straight line snip had to be my favourite part. We had to fold the paper to a point where we could cut out the whole picture with just one snip. We even got one to try at home so we can apply the skills that we have been taught and practice them.

As we approached the end of the session, the random numbers that decided who would win the festive lottery were drawn. We unfortunately didn't win as there was a less than one percent chance for us. We enjoyed experiencing a new and certainly different way of learning science, technology, mathematics and engineering as it improves many areas of maths like logic.

We would like to thank Mrs Roy for organising this for us as it was a very enjoyable and worthwhile experience for us. It was an afternoon filled with problem-solving activities, all with a festive theme.

Written by Eldana A and Rosa B



STEAM Ada Lovelace Day Competition

Ada Lovelace Day is an international celebration of the achievements of women in science, technology, engineering, and maths (STEAM). It aims to raise the profile of women in STEAM, create new role models for girls to encourage them into STEAM careers, and support women already working in these fields. Founded in 2009 by Suw Charman-Anderson, Ada Lovelace Day is celebrated annually on the second Tuesday of October, which this year fell on 8 October.

Our STEAM prefects did an amazing job promoting this year's Ada Lovelace Competition to all year groups at KS3 and KS4. We received many outstanding entries, and selecting a winner was no easy task!

All students who participated embodied the Sacred Heart goals of intellectual growth and personal development. Through their critical thinking, creativity, and perseverance, they demonstrated a strong commitment to excellence and self improvement - values at the core of our mission statement.

Mrs Roy is pleased to announce that the winner of this year's competition is Bella R (7H), with her fabulous entry!

Well done Bella!



WE HAVE ACHIEVED

TfL Pioneer Gold Awards



The Key Stage 3 TfL Pioneers Challenge Student Leadership Club have won the Gold Award!!

Throughout the year students identified travel issues in school, such as reducing car traffic, improving health and well-being and achieving sustainability targets. Students set targets to tackle issues and took part in a range of activities such as walking on school trips, using buses and tubes and leading assemblies in school.

The school have been engaged in this programme for three consecutive years and are proud to have been accredited with the prestigious Gold Award.

Congratulations to all students who took part and thank you to Ms Filipiak and Ms Marsh who ran the club.

An Inspector Calls

Year 11 enjoyed watching a production of J.B. Priestley's 'An Inspector Calls' in October in support of their GCSE English Literature course.

The Globe Players' performance of An Inspector Calls was a captivating adaptation that offered both entertainment and educational value, particularly for students studying the play for their GCSEs. It brought J.B Priestley's key themes, like social responsibility and class, to life in a way that was easy to follow and interesting. Despite some audience members not studying the play as part of their curriculum, they were still able to enjoy the dramatic tension and clever staging choices.

One standout aspect of the production was the exceptional performance by an actor who skillfully took on the multi-rolling challenge of portraying Mr. Birling, Eric, and Gerald Croft. Switching seamlessly between these distinct characters, the actor brought each one to life with unique mannerisms and vocal shifts, ensuring clarity despite the quick changes.

Delivered with wit and precision, the cast brought J.B Priestley's classic tale to life, captivating the audience from start to finish.

Poppy H, Y11





Basketball Success

Basketball continues to go from strength to strength here at Sacred Heart. We have training sessions happening twice weekly for pupils in Y7-13, a well attended and enjoyable club for all.

This term our U18A team had huge success in the 0-10 Community Round 1 Competition, winning all their games. A shout out to our U18B team who experienced their first competitive tournament together, they showed off their ever improving skills and played with enthusiasm and determination. The A team progressed to the final four competition and we are delighted to say they have now been crowned overall champions beating G&L, St Paul's and Holland Park.



U18A Team



Y7/8 team

Our Y7/8 team had their first taste of a competitive basketball tournament, playing against six other local schools. All pupils played brilliantly showing off the progress they are making. Triumphs came over Godolphin and Latymer and St Thomas Moore, narrowly losing out to the other teams which meant unfortunately they do not progress to the final four competition.

Basketball 3v3 Legacy Games

We have also played in the 3v3 legacy games hosted by St Paul's, we entered three teams made up of pupils from Y8-Y12.

Our U14 team played brilliantly, making it to the semi finals and narrowly losing out to Holland Park School.

Our U18 A and B teams sailed through their first round games, against G&L, KAA and St Paul's and played each other in the semi final. The A team triumphed and faced Godolphin and Latymer in the final. This was an extremely thrilling match with Sacred Heart coming out on top and being crowned 3v3 Legacy Games Champions.



U14 3v3 team



U18B team 3v3



U18A team 3v3



U18A team 3v3 Champions!



Marian Y11- voted MVP (most valuable person!) at 3v3 Legacy Games



Sacred Heart Dance Company

The Sacred Heart Dance Company, also known as SHDC, is a group of dedicated and passionate dancers who have been selected through a rigorous audition process. After three rounds of auditions, the most talented dancers were chosen to be part of this dance company.

Since then, these girls have been working tirelessly to perfect their dance skills and learn new choreography based on a variety of styles including Capoeira, Contemporary, Jazz, Street Dance, Lyrical and Irish dancing. Their 'Time after time' performance will be featured in the upcoming Sacred Heart 2025 dance showcase, an event not to be missed!





Sacred Heart Christian Ballet Society



The Sacred Heart Christian Ballet Society has been hard at work this past term, perfecting their technique and learning new choreography. Our students have been focusing on their barre work, centre work, and various ballet techniques such as Balanchine, Vaganova, Cecchetti, and Royal Academy of Dance.

In addition to these fundamental skills, our dancers have also had the opportunity to learn a classic solo from *Sleeping Beauty* - the Blue Bird variation - and are currently working on a choreographic piece inspired by three iconic ballets: *Les Patineurs* by Frederick Ashton, *Appalachian Spring* by Martha Graham, and *Who Cares* by George Balanchine. We are excited to share some of this beautiful choreography with you during next term's dance showcase.



Sports Leaders

Our Y11 Sports Leaders were appointed at the start of the term after applying for their leadership positions in July. They have so far shown enthusiasm and commitment to this role.

They led a very successful primary schools' indoor athletics event this term and worked tirelessly on the day. There was also a training afternoon before this. Thank you to all the leaders for giving up their time at this very busy point in Y11.

Football

The football squad have committed to training weekly and numbers continue to be high at this very popular extra-curricular club. Come rain or shine our pupils are out showing off their skills, who will be the next Lionesses...?

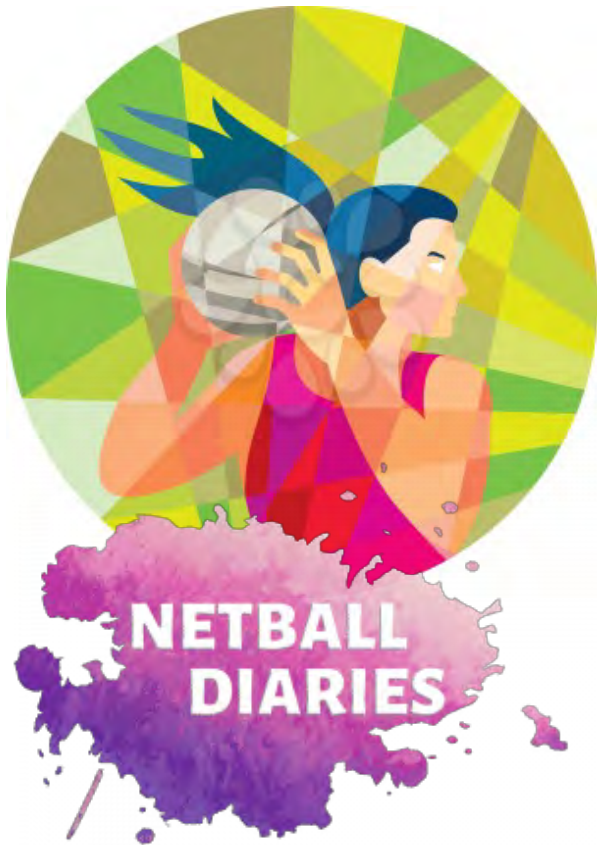
Year 7 and 8 (below) have had their first fixture against Fulham Cross this term and we are delighted to say they won 3-2. The dedication to training sessions is clearly paying off!

Tuesday Training Squads



Year 7 & 8 Football Squad





Year 10

The Year 10 netball squad have been training weekly and working hard on improving their skills and fitness. They have played the West London Free School this term narrowly losing to them. They have fixtures against Lady Margaret School and Thomas's in the new year so are looking ahead to this.



Year 10 Netball Squad



Year 10



Year 9 Netball

Netball

Year 7

The Year 7 Netball squad is off to a flying start this year. The girls have shown great commitment to training and their hard work was evident through both netball squad teams winning their first fixture against West London Free School. Team 1 won 22-3 and Team 2 won 18-2. Ms Eames is extremely proud, great work girls.



Year 7 Netball Squad



Wimbledon Ball Girls

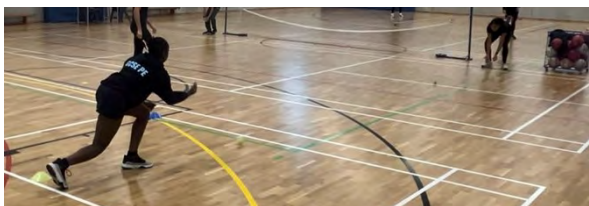


The Wimbledon Ball Girls team for 2024 has been carefully selected after a rigorous audition process. With over 70 students vying for a spot, the competition was tough and the talent pool was exceptionally strong this year. After four rounds of auditions, only the most dedicated and skilled girls made it to the final training team.

The chosen girls had to attend early morning training sessions, which consisted of stamina tests, reaction tests, court work practice, WBG theory revision and exams, as well as tennis ball drills to prepare them for their role as ball girls at one of the most prestigious sporting events in the world - The Wimbledon Championships.

As part of their preparation, these talented ladies also had the opportunity to attend a trial session at AELTC centre in Wimbledon itself. This experience was truly special for them and helped them gain valuable insights into what it takes to be a successful ball girl.

Now with just one final trial session left before they compete with other schools at Wimbledon in January, our WBG team is working harder than ever.



Visit from Alumna, Georgia Bell

We had an inspiring visit from our Olympic Bronze Medal winning alumna, Georgia Bell (1500m). She spoke in assemblies to Yrs 11, 13 & 7 and also attended a separate meeting for Q&A with a large selected group of students with a keen interest in sport.



Christmas Lunch!



How lucky we are to have kitchen staff who go the extra mile! A truly scrumptious Christmas lunch was served and the canteen was all decorated for Christmas.

The costumes made us all smile!



A Final Word

As the advent season draws to a close our focus has been on anticipation, hope, peace, joy and love. So much in our world today seems to suggest the opposite. But we are reminded in scripture:

‘The people walking in darkness have seen a great light’ (Isaiah 9:2)

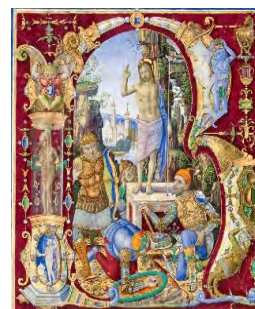
The birth of the Christ - child, the light which transforms the world.

I wish you all a very peaceful and holy Christmas and New Year.

SODonahoe

Key Dates listed overleaf





LENT TERM

JANUARY 2024		
Monday	06	All students return
Friday	10	Year 11 devised Drama Performance – free tickets available on Connect
Monday	13	Mock exams all week for Year 11 & Year 13
Thursday	23	Year 12 Parent Teacher Meeting 4-6pm
Friday	31	Year 7 Disco (PTFA) -tickets on Connect (sacredheartconnect.com)
FEBRUARY 2024		
Tuesday	04	Alumnae Reunion 1980-89 starters 5.30pm
Thursday	06	Year 9 Parent teacher Meeting 4-6pm
Friday	07	Year 8 Disco (PTFA) -tickets on Connect
Thursday	13	PSHE collapsed curriculum day
Friday	14	CAFOD Lent Family Fast Day. School day ends at the normal time
HALF TERM Monday 17 Feb-Friday 21 Feb inclusive		
Monday	24	All students return to school
Wednesday	25	Madeleine Sophie Music Comp Finals 5:30pm – free tickets available on Connect
Friday	28	Year 9, Shakespeare Festival at Unicorn Theatre 7-9pm
MARCH 2024		
Wednesday	05	Ash Wednesday
Thursday	06	World Book Day and Y9 OPTIONS EVENING 5pm
Wednesday	19	Year 11 Macbeth
Tuesday	25	Contemporary Sounds 6-7pm – free tickets on Connect
Friday	28	The Nunnery at Hammersmith, Historical Evening in aid of Cloister Paintings Fund; – open to the public, tickets available on Connect
Monday	31	GCSE Music Concert 6.00pm –free tickets available on Connect
APRIL 2024		
Thursday	04	Lent liturgy 6pm –parents welcome, free tickets will be available on Connect
Friday	05	Term ends at 1pm
EASTER HOLIDAYS		
Monday	21	Professional training day for staff (school closed to students)
Tuesday	22	Professional training day for staff (school closed to students)
Wednesday	23	All students return
Friday	25	Evening Cultural Celebration