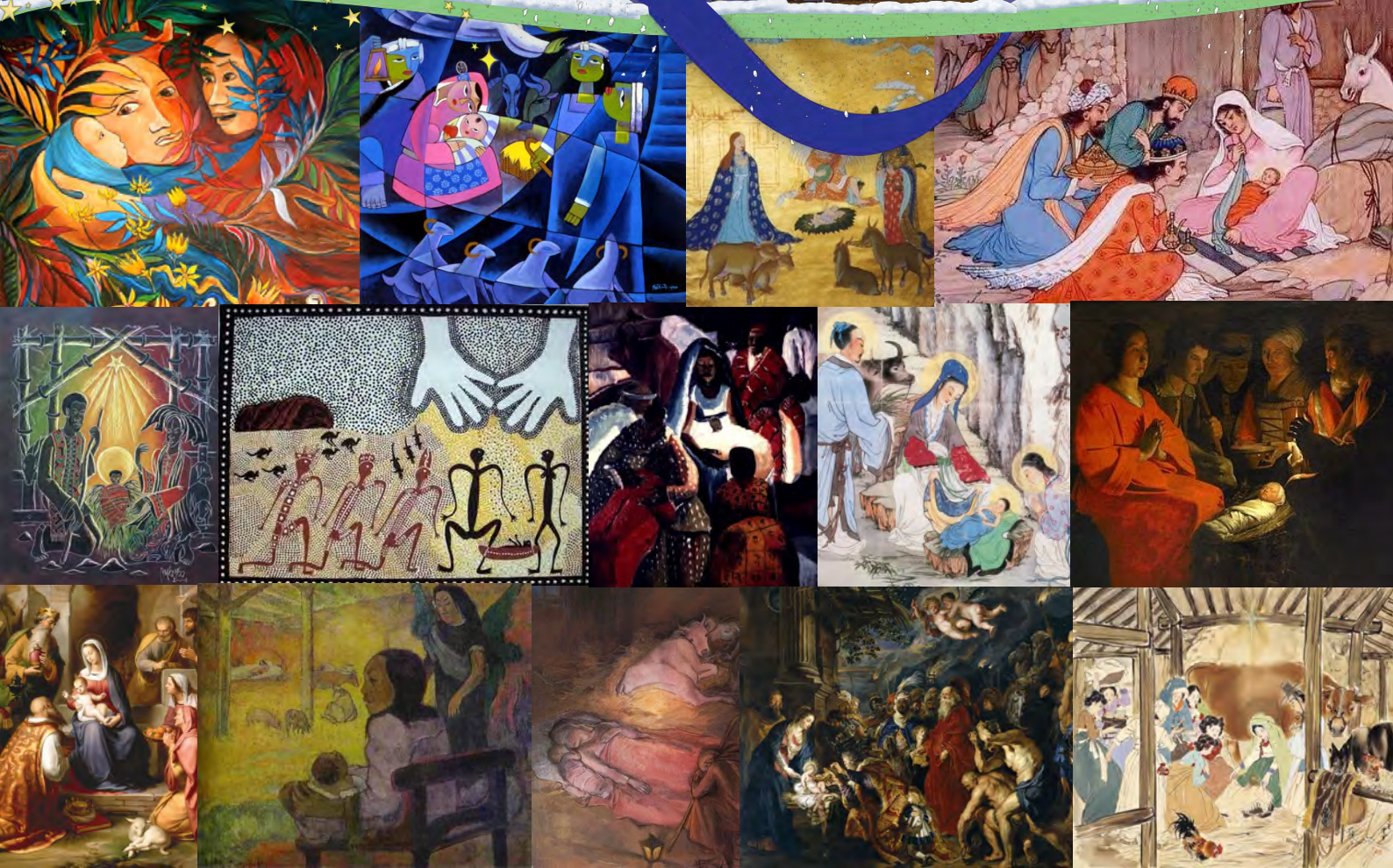


# from the heart



## The Nativity

In this academic year 2025-26, we focus on the Sacred Heart Goal of Building Community.

Nativity images from around the world remind us of a truth as old as Christmas itself: God chooses to dwell among us - in every culture, every language, every face. The manger is not confined to one place or one people.

Each variation tells the same story in a new voice. The birth of Jesus invites us into a love that honours difference, heals division, and celebrates our shared humanity.

We value the diversity of our school and the sharing of our bond of community. Every student is unique, with their own talents and purpose. We hope that you see this reflected in the broad range of activities and achievements presented in this newsletter.



## Advent Liturgy



It was a pleasure to welcome so many RSCJ sisters, members of our Sacred Heart network, school governors and parents to the Advent Service on Wednesday evening. The strong sense of community made the occasion especially meaningful and prayerful.

The choirs and soloists sang a beautiful selection of well-loved carols, expertly accompanied by Mr Gibson (Assistant Director of Music at KCS Wimbledon) and our talented instrumentalists.

Their arrangements of pieces Rutter, Viner, and many others, including by our own Head of Music Mr Swain, were truly angelic and a joy to listen to. The readers proclaimed the Word of God with such poise and confidence, clearly communicating the rich message of the Gifts of Hope, Peace Joy and Love.

## Message from the Head Girl Team



Merry Christmas to everyone in our Sacred Heart community! For many students, this term has been a new beginning; from Year 7 to Year 13, everyone has had new experiences and opportunities. We hope that students have found fulfillment in their studies and school life, and that they will continue to do so throughout the following year.

Whilst revision and routine will be very important for those with mocks coming up, remember to take a break. Use the holidays to not only revise but also to be with your family and take time to relax and unwind!

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from the Head Girl Team!



## Remembrance Service

On 19 November, a Remembrance service for our students, giving them the time to reflect and pray for their departed family members and friends. It was a reverent and peaceful occasion, during which students had the opportunity to light candles in memory of their loved ones.

Throughout the service, they offered one another comfort and shared in each other's grief with compassion, love, and understanding. It was a touching reminder of the special bonds within our school community.



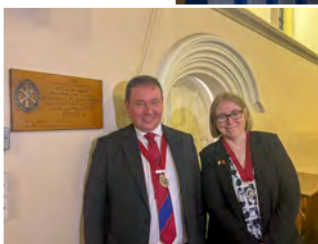
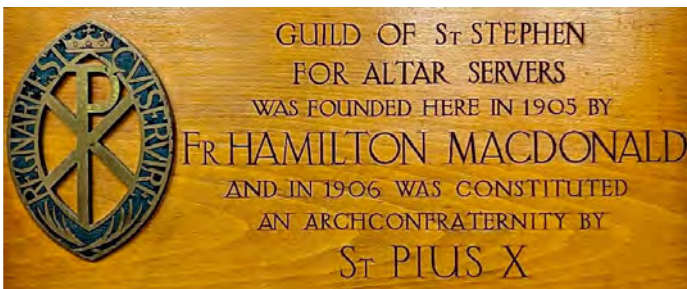
## Mass of Thanksgiving for the Guild of St Stephen for Altar Servers *founded in our chapel in 1905.*

The Guild of St Stephen is the International Organisation of Altar Servers. It was founded in England in 1905 by Father Hamilton McDonald when he formed a Society of Altar Servers in our chapel here at Sacred Heart.

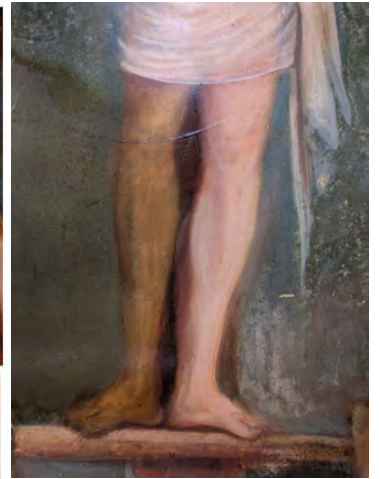
The Jubilee Year of 2025 marks a moment of profound significance in the life of the Guild. It is 120 years since Pope Pius X - now canonised - bestowed his official approval upon the Guild, and 100 years since Cardinal Bourne sanctioned a new constitution, from which the Central Council was formally established.

In honour of this historic occasion, a Solemn Mass of Thanksgiving was held in our chapel on Friday 24th October 2025. The Mass was celebrated here by Bishop Paul McAleenan, representing the Guild's Superior General, Cardinal Vincent Nichols. After the Mass, Paul Briers KCHS, Honorary President of the Guild, made a short address, followed by Mrs Dijkhuis who explained the history of the convent at Hammersmith and why our chapel may have been chosen for this. Possibly because we were a school, but also our organ was newly arrived from France.

Later that evening the school received confirmation from Father Keith Stokes, newly appointed as the Guild's National Director, that we needed no application to apply for membership of the Guild. This was because we are the birthplace of the Guild and the plaque in our chapel acts as our membership certificate! Father Keith said that he would be happy to come over to celebrate a Mass of enrolment for any new servers we may have.



## Cloister Paintings Update



We were thrilled to have raised sufficient funds by the end of the summer term to proceed with Stage 2 of this project - restoration of the two double height crucifixion paintings at the bottom of the blue stairs.

Lighting remains a problem as you can see from the glare in the first picture, but one step at a time - we may need to address lighting, but the paintings themselves are our first priority and the newly revealed colours, including the sunset in the background, are wonderfully vibrant.

A huge and heartfelt thank you to everyone who contributed with one-off donations and through tickets sales to our talks and to the garden party.



You can see more images from this Stage 2 restoration process in the gallery on Connect: [Record of Stage 2 Cloister Paintings Project | Gallery | Sacred Heart High School Hammersmith](#)

## What's Next

We now turn our sights to Stage 3, the entrance corridor, just past the chapel as you walk towards the cloisters.

We have many fundraising projects on the go at the same time and so we selected the shortest (cheapest) stretch to try to achieve this year. This needs over £12,000 and ticket sales from the event below will contribute to this so do please come and bring friends and family. Refreshments and an exhibition after the talk.

## The Nunnery at Hammersmith Thurs 12 February 2026, 7.00pm

If you haven't heard it this yet, we strongly recommend that you come! You'll be talking to friends for a long time afterwards, about the incredible women associated with our school site! Its something we all feel incredibly proud of.

*A very interesting and seamlessly coherent narrative, such an engaging presentation'.*

[Tickets for the talk](#) (open also to the public) can be booked using this link

[One off donations](#) to the cloister paintings fund can be made using this link.



## Update on our Organ Project and Grand Concert

We have submitted an application to the Historic Churches Committee HCC which acts as the planning authority for our listed chapel. They will be keen to assess any changes proposed and we are suggesting that the organ is brought forward by about 0.5m to enable better access at the back for routine maintenance.

They will also be keen to ensure the safety of the organ when it is taken apart and removed for repair and we may need to go back to the HCC at stages during the project, if new issues are discovered and decisions need approval.

We can only start formally applying to trust funds once that initial consent is in place and we hope this can be secured by February 2026.

We are however, starting informal conversations with trust funds and have made a pre-app enquiry to the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Our organ story has been shortlisted now for 'a full programme workup' for a 44-minute (long!) programme on BBC Radio 3. That doesn't mean its in the bag yet, but Whistledown Productions are now developing the programme.

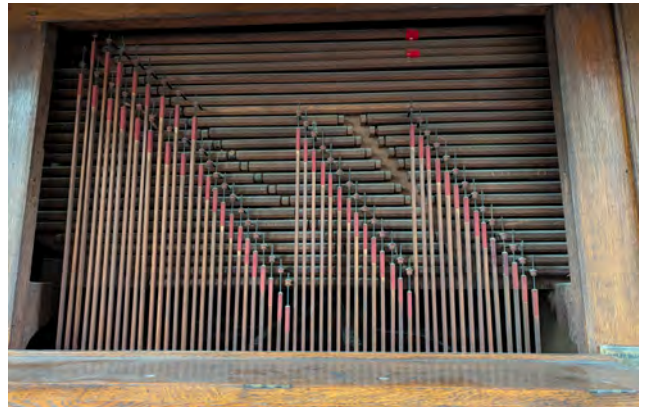
A press release was issued recently naming Mander Organ Builders as our preferred contractor. Manders look after the organ at the Royal Albert Hall.

We know the basic cost of repairing the organ as at today's date but we have had to add to this additional sums for scaffolding, electrics, structural engineer, transport, accommodation, fees, contingency, potentially a new blower, VAT, etc.

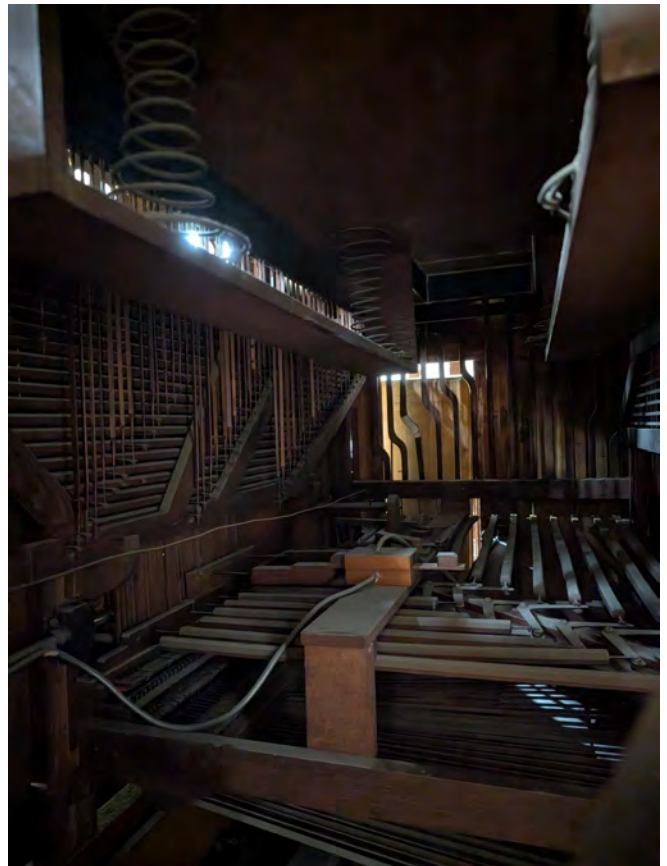
We have also increased all costs to recognise that this work will not happen until at least next year because it remains subject to fundraising. The overall sum we are seeking to raise is £257,000.

We are planning some fundraising events in school to complement our trust fund applications. These include a grand concert in March (see overleaf) with internationally renowned musicians performing with our students. We are incredibly grateful to all those who have agreed to take part.

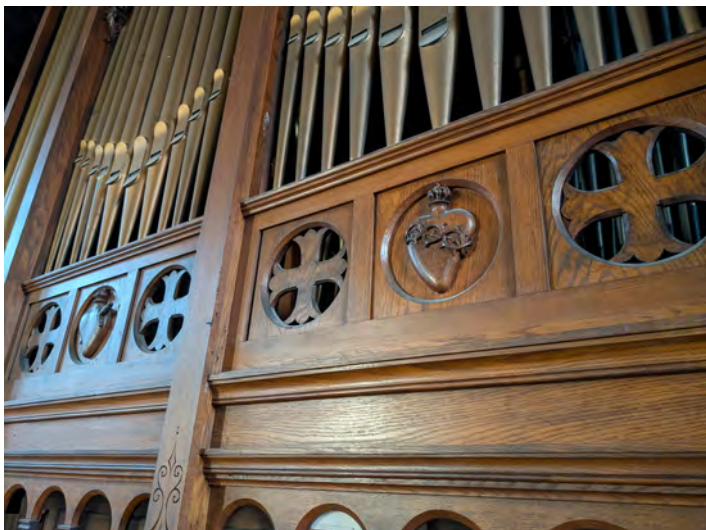
We are also planning a new organ talk, to follow later in the year.



*Image taken October 2025 when the panel above the music desk was temporarily removed*



*December 2025*



## Plans for a Grand Concert, Friday 20 March 2026

*in aid of our organ restoration fund*

We have contacted a number of people to try to raise the profile of our organ ahead of making funding applications. As part of this we contacted alumna and organist Blanaid Murphy who is now Director of Choral Music at St Mary's Cathedral in Dublin. She learned to play on our organ and she reached out to Martin Hall, a conductor who has performed in St Paul's Cathedral and Westminster Abbey.

Martin taught organ here in the 1970s and he kindly offered his services to help our Head of Music, Mr Swain (previously a flautist from the Philharmonia), to put together a grand fundraising concert in March.

Tickets will be available on Connect by about mid January. We do know already that two top musicians will join us to perform with our girls, international opera soprano Susan Gritton and the 'trumpet legend' Crispian Steele Perkins.

We hope to arrange a singing masterclass earlier in the day and tickets may also be available for that. A draft event poster can be seen right. Details are still being resolved but **SAVE THE DATE!**

### VIVALDI'S GLORIA

**FRIDAY 20 MARCH 2026, 7.00PM**  
in the chapel of Sacred Heart High School Hammersmith, 212 Hammersmith Road, London W5 4BJ

The international trumpet legend  
**Crispian Steele Perkins**

Supported by  
X lead violin, X oboe,  
X double bass



Internationally renowned opera soprano  
**Susan Gritton**

The wonderful Sacred Heart student soloists, choir & strings

Sacred Heart Head of Music & flautist  
**Kris Swain**

**Programme also includes:** to be confirmed

This concert is being held to raise money for the Sacred Heart Loree Organ Restoration Fund. The remarkable story of this organ, saved from Paris, is being developed into a radio programme and podcast by Whistledown Studios.

After the concert join us for refreshments and an exhibition about the organ with a very short 5-10 min talk about what happened in Paris, and the organ moving operation!

Tickets available in the events tab of [sacredheartconnect.com](http://sacredheartconnect.com) or you need to book. Queries to Alex Dijkhuis 0208 748 7600 x219 [comms@sacredh.lbhf.org.uk](mailto:comms@sacredh.lbhf.org.uk) With support of the Sacred Heart High School PTFA

Paid bar

DRAFT

COMING SOON!

## A new Organ talk

*in aid of our organ restoration fund*



For later in the year we are also putting together a totally new talk, a sequel of sorts to the Nunnery at Hammersmith, to explain what happened in the lead up to the Society's eviction from France.

The image on the left from a book entitled *Les Pariés de France* published in 1901 is labelled as 'A Group of Lockpickers outside a Convent, 1901'. In the centre of this photograph- with his back to the camera - is the actual man (the liquidator) who arrived at the Society's headquarters in Paris with a group of men demanding access to take an inventory of their assets, in preparation for their being forcibly sold.

Mother Mabel Digby dealt with them defiantly and our organ was packed up and shipped off before they gained access to the site.

## Update on our Lighting & AV project for the chapel

The Society of the Sacred Heart have generously promised us a substantial financial contribution towards our project to improve the lighting and audio visual equipment in the chapel.

This has now enabled us to appoint the contractor. Existing fluorescent lights and the old broken theatre lights are likely to be removed at Easter with temporary lights installed to cover us until the new lights can be put up in the summer. Some new audio visual equipment may also be installed at Easter but will not be working until the project completes in August 2026.

The scheme includes a large screen, normally hidden behind the arch, which can be lowered and then retracted as needed.

The new series of pendant lights running along both sides of the chapel will be a copy of those designed by our chapel's architect John Francis Bentley, as can be seen in St Mary's Cadogan Street, below.

The lights are also similar, albeit at a reduced scale, to the Bentley pendant lights in Westminster Cathedral.



*Bentley pendant lights at St Mary's, Cadogan Street. New pendant lights copying this design will be installed in our chapel over the summer.*



*Larger but very similar Bentley pendant lights in Westminster Cathedral.*

## PTFA Activities



Our PTFA volunteers are always busy with fundraising and community building activities. This term their annual quiz night was a huge success. It's a great opportunity for parents to socialise with one another and it was good to see so many Year 7 parents taking part

Ten rounds plus a picture quiz, and each team could choose in advance which round to use as a 'Joker round' for double points. So hard to decide! Art & Literature? Music Trivia? Sport? Science and Nature? Or the dreaded Ladder round with 10 answers and if you get one wrong, you lose all your points! Staff team came third. Gloves off for next year!

The quiz importantly also raised £1,500 to kick start the PTFA focus this year on our student loos refurbishment project and support for an IT upgrade.

Almost immediately after the quiz, volunteers geared up for the Christmas Hamper fundraiser. This takes a huge amount of organisation and we are so grateful for the time donated by the PTFA volunteers and of course for the gift donations and raffle ticket purchasing from others across our community.

This raised over £5,700 - the highest ever for a Christmas fundraiser.



# New Annual Fundraising Impact Report



This term we produced our first [Annual Fundraising Impact Report](#) which reviews money raised across the whole of last year; how it has been spent and plans for the future. The report explains the difference between fundraising carried out by the PTFA and monies collected by the school from regular giving and one-off donations to the School Fund.

Many thanks from everyone at the school, to the 132 parents who generously donate through monthly payments. To the remaining 900 parents, regular donations are of course entirely voluntary but just to say that support of any amount is greatly appreciated. As shown in the report, your support really does make a difference and helps the school maintain its reputation for educational excellence. If you feel that you can donate at any level please do so using this link [Regular Giving to Sacred Heart High School](#).

You can read more about our regular giving scheme on the [Regular Giving tab on Connect](#).

## Sixth Form Strategy 2025-2028



Our [Sixth Form Strategy](#) includes a welcome from Sister Margaret Wilson, Chair of our Academy Trust, and a review of the values which shape our school.

The foreward from our Chair of Governors Glen Hodgson, talks about the trustees commitment to the school's new three-year plan. This continues our ambitious programme of restoration and enhancements including plans for the refurbishment of part of the school as a sixth form collaborative learning space; an upgrade for the sixth form common room; and as already delivered over the summer, enhancements to the sixth form outdoor space and a new sixth form art gallery.

Mrs O'Donovan writes more about the new School Plan 2025-28 including a revised curriculum offer for sixth form; a new enrichment programme; the strengthening of external partnerships and our scholarship programme; and extended sixth form leadership opportunities.

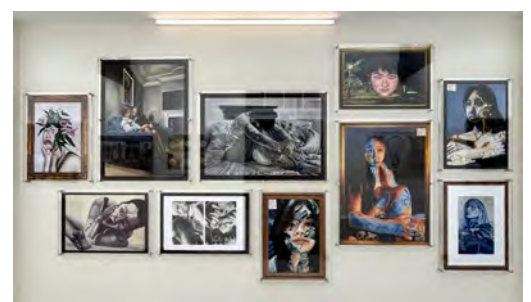
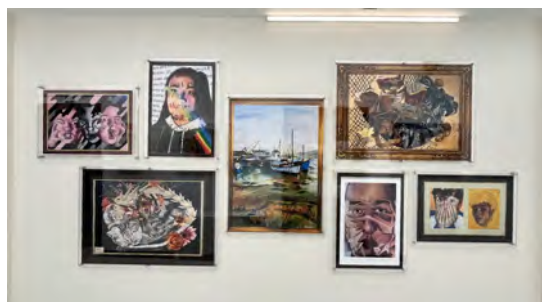
Each of the five goals of Sacred Heart education are reviewed with priorities and commitments, together with reflections from past sixth formers.



*New sixth form art gallery in Bute Hall*



*New outside furniture for the sixth form*



## Celebrating Success of our new Micro-Internship Programme



*Maia A, Savannah D, Kai En L and Sofia M, who enjoyed a site tour of the impressive new HS2 station at Old Oak Common courtesy of principal contractor BBVS.*

## Year 11 and 12 Oxbridge working group

We have over 30 incredible Year 11 and 12 students who are participating in a variety of activities this year to give them an insight into how to apply for Oxford and Cambridge, as well as how to apply for subjects such as Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Medicine. On Tuesday 16 December, four Sacred Heart alumnae came back to the school to run a Oxbridge Q&A session for our students. It was a highly informative and enriching workshop, which gave our students first hand insight into the tough application process, as well as what life is like at some of the most prestigious universities in the country.

Our thanks to Sonia Akdag Garcia (third year Imperial for Medicine); Chastyn Quesada (first year Veterinary Medicine at Bristol); Ainhoa Garcia Reyes (graduated from Oxford 2025, with a First class honours degree in Theology from Oxford 2025) and Abbi Aslin (second year Oxford reading Classics and English).

Additionally we are very grateful to Rachel Obordo, alumna (and now also our Upper School link Governor) who has been in school to visit Year 12 and 13 politics students discussing the role of media in politics and her own journey in media. Rachel is Head of Community Editorial at The Telegraph.



We are proud to celebrate the successful completion of the first cohort of our Micro-Internship Programme, delivered in partnership with St Paul's Girls' School in Hammersmith. This pioneering initiative gave our students an incredible opportunity to gain hands-on experience, explore career pathways, and develop essential skills for life beyond school.

### What is a Micro-Internship?

Micro-internships are short, focused projects that allow students to immerse themselves in professional environments without the long-term commitment of traditional internships. They are designed to be flexible, impactful, and skills-driven, offering a real taste of the working world while supporting academic priorities.

### Highlights from the First Cohort

Over the past term, students from Sacred Heart worked alongside industry professionals on meaningful projects across a range of sectors - from creative industries to STEM fields. They developed **transferable skills** such as problem-solving, communication, and teamwork, while gaining valuable insights into potential career paths. Students worked with companies including Balfour Beatty, McKinsey, Arup, TradeBridge, QED Investors, vPPR and BRS LLP

### What's Next?

Following the success of this first cohort, the next group of students will begin their Micro Internships in the Spring term with an even wider range of companies and organisations.

### A Partnership Built on Opportunity

Our collaboration with St Paul's Girls' School reflects a shared commitment to empowering young women through education and experience. By working together, we have created a dynamic opportunity to prepares students for success beyond the classroom.

## Sixth Formers meet acclaimed poet Kayo Chingonyi



A group of poetry enthusiasts from our Sixth Form attended a trip to Putney High School to hear acclaimed poet Kayo Chingonyi discuss his poetry collection *Kukumanda*.

It was a very insightful event highlighting Chingonyi's creative processes and the various meanings behind his poetry, while enabling students to ask questions and feel inspired to continue writing their own poems. Plus, thanks to Ms Bailey, a former Sacred Heart teacher, we got front row seats!

## British Library Essay Writing Workshop



Year 12 English Literature students attended a full-day **essay writing workshop** at the British Library. The workshop was run by published Welsh poet, Jonathan Edwards, who engaged students in a range of interesting discussions and debates.



## Business students organise our Christmas Fair

The students' Christmas Fair was a wonderful success! Our school was filled with festive cheer as the Reception Room and Old Gym were transformed into vibrant spaces, beautifully decorated with bright lights and joyful music. From the moment students arrived, the atmosphere was warm and welcoming.

The fair featured a fantastic range of stalls and activities, and they were a huge hit with our student community! The Bake Sale offered delicious homemade treats, while the Hot Chocolate stand kept everyone cosy. The Sweet Stall was a favourite, and Raffle Tickets sold out quickly thanks to the amazing prizes. The Photo Booth captured countless festive memories, and Face Painting added colour and fun. Even the classic Pin the Reindeer Nose game drew plenty of laughter and friendly competition.

The creativity and enthusiasm of our students made these stalls a real highlight of the day, and their hard work ensured everything ran smoothly and successfully. Most importantly, the fair raised an impressive £1,798 for Alice's Arc and The Passage, showing how our entire school community come together to support important causes.

A heartfelt thank you to every student and member of staff who helped organise, run, and take part in the Christmas Fair. Your efforts made this event unforgettable and helped make a real difference.



## Sixth Form Ice Skating



On Thursday 27 November, the Sixth Form adventured through the ice skating rink in Battersea Power Station. Filled with laughter, joy, and even a few falls, we were able to take a break from the academics and have fun celebrating the Christmas season.

It was a great opportunity for the Year 12s and 13s to bond together outside of the classroom and the basement, with some of us enjoying a hot cocoa afterwards. It is moments like these that remind us how important it is to stay connected with each other, emphasising the theme of community this year.



## Michaelmas Term Rewards Trips

Our students had an amazing time on the Michaelmas Term rewards trips! Years 8 and 9 went to Winter Wonderland Ice Skating. Years 10, 11, 12 and 13 went bowling at Queens Way. And Year 7 went to the Lyric Theatre to see Jack and the Beanstalk! Well done to everyone!



## Y11 Careers Fair



In November, Y11 students found plenty of inspiration for their futures at the amazing What Career Live careers fair at Kensington Olympia.



## The Brilliant Club



We are excited to be a Brilliant Club School, partnering with *The Brilliant Club* to run The Scholars Programme with our Year 9 and 10 students.

The Scholars Programme gives students in secondary school the opportunity to explore higher education and build key critical thinking and written communication skills to help them succeed in the next stages of their education.

Our students will take part in a series of seven university-style tutorials, delivered by a PhD tutor over seven weeks. They will be studying the topic: “STEM - Biology and Ethics” and will have to write a final assignment demonstrating the subject knowledge and key skills they have developed throughout the programme. Students will receive individual feedback, and upon completion, attend a Graduation event hosted by a London university to celebrate their achievements.

# Year 7 Welcome Mass



It was so lovely in September to hear all our new Year 7 students singing so beautifully in the chapel having only been with us for a couple of weeks. All our new students received a welcome Sacred Heart bag, containing a Sacred Heart bible, rosary, and Sacred Heart presentation folder to store all the certificates and records of achievement they will accrue in the coming years.

The Mass, led by Father Patrick and Deacon Tito, took place in front of many of our new parents and everyone then congregated for tea outside in the cloister garden. The sunshine returned to us specially for this event!



## Year 7 induction activities, September 2025



## Year 7 Concert

To celebrate the end of their first half term at secondary school, Year 7 students gave a brilliant performance in their October concert. The concert brought everyone together in a lovely display of community and enthusiasm, with a range of singers and instrumentalists taking part - including a short violin feature that was very well received.

The only hiccup came when a fire alarm went off, cutting the concert short by about five minutes, but the students took it in their stride and were still proud of what they achieved!

*The concert was really fun and a great opportunity to show others what I can do. I enjoyed listening to the other performers and watching everyone play and sing. Singing together the songs we had been learning in music lessons was especially enjoyable. I was very happy that I auditioned for the concert, as it helped me feel more confident. I love playing music, and I think it is a great way to connect with other people. I would definitely take part again and hope there will be a Year 8 concert next year!*

Jessica – Year 7 (Performer)

Violinist, Yasmin S Y7



## Sacred Heart Chamber Choir at Farm Street Church



On 2 December in the evening, our Sacred Heart Chamber Choir performed three beautiful pieces of Christmas music - On Christmas Night, Noel, and Star Carol - as part of a moving charitable service at Farm Street Church in Mayfair.

The choir sang with sensitivity and spirit, bringing warmth and joy to the occasion. Their performance was very well received by all in attendance. It was a memorable experience that the students thoroughly enjoyed.

*The service was a wonderful experience. I really enjoyed singing in such a large and beautiful church, as the space made the music feel even more special. Everyone there was incredibly welcoming, and the organisers made us feel very comfortable. The pieces we performed - On Christmas Night, Noel, and Star Carol- went really well, and we successfully sang some harmonies. Receiving such a big round of applause at the end was very rewarding. The speeches were heartfelt and moving, and being part of the service felt like a real privilege as it brought the community together.*

Zoe – Year 8 (Performer)

## Bright Sparks Concert



*Year 10 and Year 11 classes had the opportunity to visit the Festival Hall to watch the London Philharmonic Orchestra perform several set works from our GCSE syllabus, including Bach's Brandenburg Concerto. It was an exciting and highly educational experience, and one I would definitely like to repeat. Hearing a live orchestra for the first time was amazing and really helped bring the music we study in lessons to life. I especially enjoyed the interactive elements of the concert and spending time with other students our age. Overall, it was a memorable and inspiring experience.*

Sesina – Year 10

## BBC Television Centre Carols



Our Sacred Heart Singers from Show Choir and Chamber Choir brought festive cheer to the BBC Television Centre in December.

Thankfully, the weather held up, allowing us to step outside and embrace the winter atmosphere as we performed a joyful mix of traditional carols and Christmas classics. It was a wonderful way to share the spirit of the season.

# Jack Petchey's "SPEAK OUT" Challenge!

The Jack Petchey award is part of a youth recognition scheme for individuals from 11-25 around Essex and London. The awards recognise personal effort, overcoming challenges, and going above and beyond, not just academic success.

Annually, in school, we hold a competition in November, after a day of oracy workshops in September, to decide on the finalists from Year 10 for the Jack Petchey Speakout Challenge. This assembly event sees Year 10s presenting their speeches to the year group and a panel of judges. They are then evaluated based on style, content and delivery, and the winner is chosen to then compete in the regional final, which this year will be held at Phoenix Academy. The winner of the regional final receives £100 and qualifies for the national final where they then compete for £250 prize money to be spent on a project of their choice.

This year's winner was Martina BB, with Bethelle F as runner up, and our finalist was Jenita BB, all seen in the front row with Mr Cooper and Ms Kennedy at the back.

When Mr Cooper was a student he won the Jack Petchey award himself, see photos below!



Mr Cooper writes:

*The Jack Petchey programme changed the course of my schooling. My own Geography teacher, Mr Taylor encouraged me to take part in the initiative.*

*I was quieter at school, and never liked speaking away from the very select group of people I was used to. Jack Petchey's organisation worked with me through a series of workshops and delivered sessions which helped change my confidence and perspective on speaking in front of my peers.*

*The workshops allowed me to organise my thoughts and speak confidently... years later I am the Geography teacher encouraging students to do the very same; to find their own voices.*

*I owe my job as a teacher to Mr Taylor and to the folks at Jack Petchey.*

# Moderating the UN International Day of the Girl 2025



On October 11, 2025, I had the opportunity to represent the Society of the Sacred Heart by participating as a moderator at the United Nations for the International Day of the Girl, during the “Girls Speak Out” conference in New York. The day before the event, I met Helen O’ Reagan, Nancy Murphy, Gwendolyn Hoeffel and Margaret Mwarili, who are all Sisters of the Sacred Heart, who have long supported girls’ education and leadership. They shared advice about mentorship, advocacy, and listening to girls’ voices, which helped me prepare for my role. I stayed the first night at the Sacred Heart NGO apartment, where Sr. Margaret Mwarili was extremely welcoming and accommodating throughout the conference and in the aftermath.

On the morning of the conference, we arrived at the UN Headquarters early. Security was thorough, IDs were checked, bags were screened, and everyone went through metal detectors. The process took time, but I shortly learnt it was part of the routine at such an international event.

Inside, girls and youth advocates from around the world were preparing for the day, including participants and UN Member States from the United States, Canada, Ghana, Liberia, Bolivia, and other countries. UN agencies and representatives were present to coordinate the schedule and ensure everything ran smoothly.

Before the live session, we had several rehearsals and run-throughs - introducing speakers, managing transitions, and keeping the program on schedule. All the girls, including myself, also rehearsed our speeches. Some were nervous, others confident, but all were prepared to share our experiences / questions. Watching them practice reminded me how much courage it takes to speak in front of a global audience and reinforced the importance of my role.

The conference took place in the ECOSOC Chamber, one of the UN’s meeting rooms. I had chosen to lead the first panel, ***Girls on the Frontline of Crisis: Protection, Peace & Power***, along with Hannah, who represented the National Council of Jewish Women in Vancouver. We both introduced the speakers and guided the discussion together. I wasn’t too sure how to feel at first, but once the panel began, we focused on keeping the discussion moving while making sure each girl felt supported. One of my favourite parts of the event was when I led the live polling and panel quiz, where I had the chance to interact with the audience!

The first panel highlighted the challenges girls face in crisis situations, including displacement, conflict, and limited access to education. We shared personal experiences,

advocacy projects, and initiatives we had led in our communities. Our confidence and preparation were impressive, and I was definitely inspired by how well everyone performed.

The second panel, ***From Margins to Power: Girls Defying Discrimination and Reclaiming Identity***, focused on girls confronting inequality and marginalisation. Although I didn’t lead this panel, I observed and learned from how the other moderators guided discussion and supported the speakers.

Throughout the day, I spoke with participants from different countries. They shared projects they were working on, challenges in accessing education, and how attending the UN event had motivated them to continue their advocacy. These conversations highlighted how global the work for girls’ rights is and the value of learning from different perspectives.

At the end of the event, I was approached by a board member of the Colorado Black Women for Social and Political Action. Although we didn’t have too much time to go into the main details about their non-profit organisation, they invited me to attend their upcoming conference next March, which was both exciting and rewarding. They also briefly discussed their global partners in the NGO.

I also discussed going back to the UN for future events and contributing to similar conferences in the future. The experience has inspired me to continue working on issues affecting girls and youth, both locally and globally.

Moderating the UN conference was an incredible experience. It taught me that leadership is not just about speaking in front of an audience but also about creating space for others to share their stories, facilitating the structure of the event, and helping amplify voices from backgrounds that might otherwise go unheard. The International Day of the Girl 2025 showed that girls are not only being positively affected by change, but they are also leading it themselves. Being part of this event and connecting with participants from around the world was an experience I will always remember.

**Eliana B, Year 11**

## Ypres Trip



In late October, a group of Year 9 and Year 13 students went to Belgium to further their knowledge about World War 1. As soon as we arrived in Belgium, we were swiftly taken to the Passchendaele Museum, where we had the opportunity to see paintings, antique war memorabilia and clothing worn by real wartime soldiers. For me, the most memorable part of the museum was the 1 to 1 re-creation of wartime trenches, complete with life sized figures of soldiers, dressed in uniform and holding prop guns.

At around 8pm, we set out towards the Menin Gate Memorial, where the last post ceremony is held every night. The beautiful structure inspired a reflective and mournful atmosphere in all who were there. It was a great privilege to place the wreath during the service on behalf of the school.

The next day began with a guided tour of the battlefields and cemeteries surrounding Ypres, including the Tyne Cot Cemetery, the largest cemetery for commonwealth forces in the world, holding 12,000 graves. We were also taken to two other cemeteries, the Essex Farm grave site which was made for unidentified soldiers who died in the fighting and the Langemark German Military Cemetery, meant for only German soldiers. It was a truly enlightening experience seeing the sheer number of graves in just three of the Ypres cemeteries.

After this, we were given two hours of free time to explore the town and buy souvenirs to take home. The town is not only rich with historical context but also in its social life, the cafes offered friendly service and great food; in the same way the gift shops offered a quaint atmosphere and a little piece of Belgium to take home. I even explored the cathedral in the town centre and marvelled at the beautiful stained glass windows and historical architecture.

As a Year 13 politics student, this trip was extremely educational for me, as it gave me an insight into the minds of political leaders in World War 1, and showed me first hand the devastation caused by war. Furthermore, it was a great bonding experience with both my A-Level class and the Year 9s who accompanied us. I thought it was a wonderful experience!

*Lois H, Year 13*

Members of [sacredheartconnect.com](https://sacredheartconnect.com) will be able to access a fuller gallery of images from this trip below.

[First World War - a history trip to Ypres, Belgium | Gallery | Sacred Heart High School Hammersmith](#)



THE LONDON SCHOOL  
OF ECONOMICS AND  
POLITICAL SCIENCE

## Summer Boot Camp

In July, I was honoured to attend LSE's summer bootcamp, a one-week experience to further my knowledge on entrepreneurship and innovation.

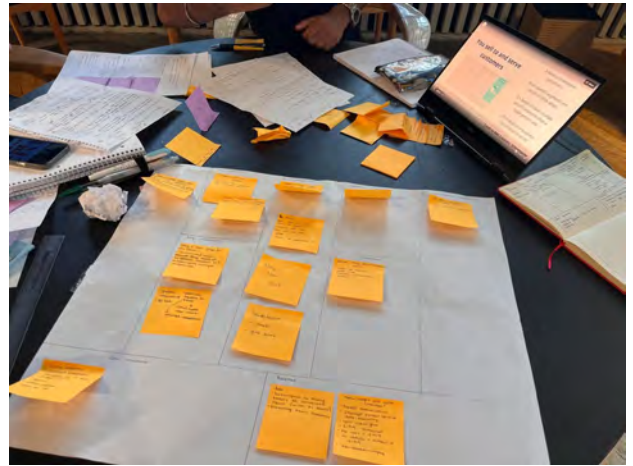
For the first two days, I picked up vital skills in order to think like an entrepreneur. With my amazing teacher, Andy Ayim MBE, I learnt new concepts like how to make consumer personas and business model canvases to a high standard. I also developed my critical thinking skills as an 'entrepreneur', like knowing how to differentiate a business from competitors and how to sell a business pitch to investors.

On the third day, my group and I learnt about the importance of developing our soft skills to differentiate ourselves in a society that is slowly being dominated by AI. My group and I also met successful entrepreneurs where we were allowed to have a Q&A session, a valuable experience learning from their mistakes and achievements. We then went on a university campus tour, an eye-opening experience where we noticed the endless amenities the university has to offer, as well as the aspiring students on the campus.

For the rest of the week, my team and I developed and, at the end, presented our business pitch 'SplitView', an unbiased news platform that aims to reduce political polarisation and the spread of misinformation, presenting young people with reliable views from diverse perspectives. I am very proud of my team as we collectively worked very diligently together, as well as contributing great public speaking skills. As a result, this made us the winning team, each receiving an internship. I can't wait to meet them again on the campus! I also received another internship for a social media campaign and am so grateful that I will have future opportunities to go back to LSE.

I will treasure my experience at LSE, knowing that I made many memories and connections, but most importantly, it sparked my interest in entrepreneurship. I would recommend to anyone to apply to LSE's summer bootcamp, as I feel so privileged to have worked with proactive students and very experienced entrepreneurs and teachers.

*Emanuela C, Y11*



# Year Group Winners of the Library's Poetry Competition

This year's theme was 'growth' and a large number of students from Year 7 to Year 13 interpreted the theme uniquely and wrote fantastic entries. Huge congratulations to the Year Group winners: Eva C (Y7), Tahlia F (Y8), Nia F-A (Y9), Natalia B-B (Y10), Emmanuella Corrado (Y11), and Mailys K (Y13).



## Year 7: Growth by Eva C

A simple seed is something small,  
But a burst of life buried deep,  
And after years, it grows so tall,  
Awoken from its beauty sleep.

Like trees that formed, but long ago,  
Withstood the eras that came and went,  
From seeds to towers, they did grow,  
Their twisted spines and branches bent.

Give some time and you will see,  
A blossom, a bloom, a vibrant sprout,  
An array of colour will come to be,  
Which the cycle of life has brought about.

From baby to child to adult born,  
The wings of a weakling are yet to be spread,  
Loved and bruised and built and torn,  
Enduring through the struggles ahead.

Every cloud has a silver lining,  
After every storm, you'll find a rainbow,  
We all face struggles, they have their timing,  
But they play a part in helping us grow!

## Year 8: Through the grey by Tahlia F

What is love that binds like the roots to the earth,  
A force unshaken by the storm,  
The whispered words in darkest night,  
A flame that flickers, the brightest light

What is love that holds like a heartbeat strong,  
The gentle touch that soothes the soul,  
The whispered promises in the dead of night,  
The warmth of love and radiating light

When the comfort of love finally fades,  
When death takes away our glory days,  
The stillness our souls keep,  
The secrets and messages hidden deep,  
The memories and laughs hiding in caverns peak,  
In whispers soft the heart does speak,  
A language known to those who seek

Why does death take that love,  
It is that darkness that rids the day,  
The grief we cannot define,  
The shadows that echoes in our minds,  
But in the silence of grief lost in pain,  
I feel invisible to loves warm touch,  
My heart lost and in the shadows a ghost remains

You took your last breath and I died with you,  
Leaving me sunken at sea with soaked tissues,  
Though you're no longer here I love for you, now your  
song echoes in the space your absence left so dear.



The scars I cut remain a sign,  
that my love for you shall withstand the test of time,  
And now my pain a declaration of growth,  
And in this silence, I'll find a way,  
to break though,  
Finding strength to carry on a new,  
Helping me heal and make it through

Growth is slow,  
A journey through grey,  
Learning to live with grief day by day  
A memory that haunts,  
A love that's hard to hold near,  
A fleeting whisper of what was once dear,  
Time may heal but for now I'll stay a ghost of love in  
this endless grey

## Year Group Poetry Competition Winners, continued

### Year 9: Growth by Nia F-A

The birth of a sprouting seed so significant in this vast world,  
Embraced by a nurturing mother shall flourish never unheard.  
Oh how a youthful child's smile blooms with glee,  
For such innocence and brightness makes fear shiver in defeat.

As we learn and adapt crooked paths diverge anew,  
Monsters of hate and strong emotions can start to brew.  
The road of adolescence brings pain, struggle and betrayal,  
But we learn our love is eternal and to stand up for people without fail.

Through the stresses of adulthood and responsibilities we may hold,  
Our childlike innocence dimmers and pain unfolds.  
But through the many nights with company or alone,  
You can still grow and flourish through the many paths once more.

Between the cries of beggar or utmost lies of politicians,  
Society's dystopian world still has hopeful options to be risen.  
Every hardship making us as strong as diamonds,  
Can breed success and make us see our souls awake once more.

A heart of righteous that binds thee to the foundation of life,  
Our lifelong spirits with never-ending fight.  
We are architects of our paths, young or old,  
Embrace the journey no matter the stage.  
We can all fly and dream if we grow confident and bold.  
Take the shackles off your feet and dance feeling uplifted.

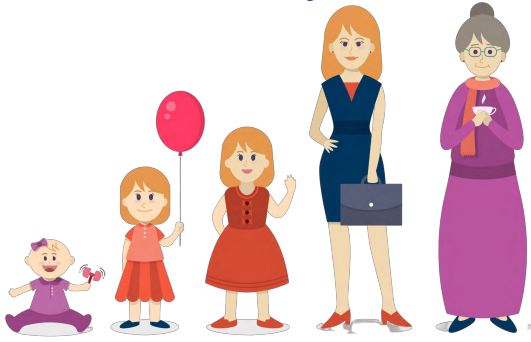


### Year 10: Butterflies by Natalia B-B

Like a butterfly takes shape divulging its true self out of its co-  
coon,  
We grow and express ourselves listening to the tune,  
The little flutter that you hear inside your mind,  
You look back to all the memories and people you left behind.  
It takes a lot of strength for the poor butterfly to fly,  
But watch where it goes when it accepts it grows.

Growing up is a part of life,  
From a small little caterpillar to a butterfly,  
From a child to a teenager to an adult,  
Every cocoon you unravel, a new problem or memory is made,  
But that's how we grow.  
We are butterflies that never fade.

## Year 11: Growth by Emanuela C



Yesterday, I was a baby, on the floor I'd play,  
Taking tiny steps, in a brand new way.  
First words spoken, with a voice so sweet,  
First teeth emerging, with a smile to greet.

The tooth fairy's visit, with a magical delight,  
Losing teeth, a milestone in the morning light.  
Dolls and Barbies, my constant friends so dear,  
Bringing joy and laughter, year after year.

Today, I'm a teenager, growing fast and strong,  
Learning, growing, and knowledge will last all life long.

Ahead are student life's adventures, with a diploma to claim,  
A new chapter unfolds, with opportunities to gain.

From baby to woman, I'll run this long race,  
Taking the baton of wisdom, with a smile on my face.  
I'll grow, I'll learn, I'll shine with all my might,  
And make my mark, with a heart full of light.



## Year 13: Growth by Mailys K

For years I was eager to grow old.  
Old enough to pay for my favourite sweets at the boutique down the street,  
Old enough to hear the adult talks, downstairs in the living room,  
which took place once a week,  
Old enough to play with the big kids in the park and to feel like I belonged  
To be respected,  
poised and strong.

Because for me,  
Being old meant power, wisdom, growth and strength  
Yet, I failed to see that with growth came the unspoken burden of responsibilities and the exposure to the darkness, cruelty, and infinite poisons of this world that my young self was too blind to see.

Covered up, by that young childlike innocence that refused to see the monsters that lurked in the dark.  
Those with bad intentions that so thickly layered their hearts.  
Not to mention the darkness that weighed on people's souls and minds, ready to grab sight of anything deemed pure and untouched.  
Innocent and free.

Soon, as I grew older,  
the word growth,  
Changed meaning entirely.  
It now held an undertone of powerlessness and harsh accountability,  
countless obligations lacking any warmth, comfort, and familiarity.

Gone, were the days that I wished to  
be old enough to pay for my favourite sweets at the boutique down the street,  
or  
Old enough to hear the adult talks, downstairs in the living room once a week.

Gone, were the days that I wished to be old enough to play with the big kids in the park and to feel like I belonged.  
To be respected,  
poised and strong.

Growth does not always come with old age and growth does not equal power.  
Growth within ourselves means learning not to cower,  
From the potential power that we hold.  
That light inside of us that begs to be set free, and tell all the stories untold.

To make our mark in the world  
engraved in the soil of our ancestors, so that we can grow to be better and learn from each other.

Ultimately, now I see,  
growth means learning to be true to ourselves, and to push the boundaries and limits that we set for ourselves.

Because growth is something that only we can unlock. Yet, we must prepare for the weighted responsibilities and truths that we will have to bear.

Growth is present in everything that we do.

The past,  
present,  
and future, and in the minutes and seconds. We just have to be willing to face it, because it is universal and always present.

## A little interesting Sacred Heart history



Isabella Ada Hunt (nee Norris) (1907-2011) was a pupil at Sacred Heart Hammersmith and her son Dr William Hunt has kindly shared images of certificates she received at school for good conduct, industry and attendance for 1916-17 and for 1917-18.

It is interesting to see from the wording on the certificates that normally medals would have been awarded but the use of medals had been suspended, because of the Great War.

The saving and collection of metal in the UK during the First World War was an organised and significant part of the home front war effort. Waste materials, including various metals, were collected through public drives and volunteer efforts to be recycled and used for essential war production

As a child Ada lives in the Slaters Cottages Brook Green, where she was born (at no 12 or 13!) on 9 December 1907. The photograph of the cottages below dated 1910 was obtained from the Hammersmith archives. Ada would have been about 2 or 3 at the time, but its not known if she appears in the photo.

Ada attended the primary school here (where our Design & Tech department is today) and she was encouraged to stay on into the secondary school to take part in teacher training. 10 shillings a month was needed for this but the family could not afford that and Ada ended up working in a laundry.

How lucky we all are to be able to access free education today, up to the end of sixth form.



# Over the summer break, Ms Filipiak reached the summit of Mount Kilimanjaro!



Ms Filipiak writes:

When I was still in school, my geography teacher told us that climbing Kilimanjaro feels like travelling from the equator to the Arctic — because of its unique flora and fauna. That's when I decided: One day, I will climb Kilimanjaro." Over a year ago, I committed to finally make this dream come true." My training began:

- Gym and personal coaching
- Breathing exercises
- Altitude training
- Gear preparation
- Most importantly: building the right mindset

It wasn't easy — there were many obstacles on the way. But every challenge became part of the preparation for the greatest challenge of my life. The climb was step by step, day after day, 'Pole, pole (slowly), Jumbo, Jumbo (hello in Swahili)'.

After five days of climbing and one long, difficult summit night 2nd August 2025, I stood at 5,895 meters: the Roof of Africa!

The biggest challenge of my life became the greatest victory. My childhood dream came true. Kilimanjaro taught me that with preparation, persistence, and belief - nothing is impossible.

**Each of us has our own Kilimanjaro.**

**What's yours? And when will you start climbing?**



## Odd Socks Day



In November we celebrated Odd Socks Day—an annual event on the first day of Anti-Bullying Week that encourages students and staff to wear mismatched socks to celebrate individuality and promote acceptance.

Every year, bullying impacts the lives of countless young people and silence helps it grow. Sacred Heart and the Anti-Bullying Alliance are empowering young people to safely speak up and raise awareness when they see bullying, face to face or online.

## Anti-Bullying Training



We believe the key to tackling bullying is empowering our students to develop greater empathy and leadership skills. That's why we've applied for The Diana Award's Anti-Bullying Ambassador training.

If selected, 50 of our students will attend sessions focused on tackling racist, homophobic, and misogynistic bullying, and build skills to support their fellow students in creating a kinder, safer school environment. This will also lead to more leadership opportunities for students across all years.

## Library Project: Anti-Bullying Craft Workshop



For Anti-bullying week, students browsed a curated collection of anti-bullying books from the library display. These books were aimed at asserting a community of kindness, as well as developing students' empathy, sense of self, and kindness. Students also took part in an anti-bullying crafts workshop at the library.

This event was very popular and many students enjoyed making all sorts of crafts to keep for themselves or share with others. Similarly, during World Kindness Day, our Journaling Club reflected on kindness; what it means in our everyday lives and how we can be kind to others as well as to ourselves.

## Library

The library has been extremely busy this Michaelmas term! As we settled into the new academic year, we resumed and refreshed the life of the library and held various new initiatives, competitions, talks, and workshops.

### Summer Reading Challenge

To begin the term, the winners of our SHHS Summer Reading Challenge were announced! The purpose of the Summer Reading Challenge was to encourage and challenge students to read as many books over the summer as possible and write short reviews of them. The KS3 winner of this challenge was Francesca R, who read the highest number of books in KS3, and who was very closely followed by Grace M. In KS4, the winner of the challenge was Lucinda C, for similarly spending her summer reading and achieving the highest number of books read in KS4. Congratulations for your amazing achievements!

### Paired Reading

Recognising their new position in our school, many Year 12 students continued to take initiative in other aspects of the library. Year 12 students have signed up to participate in Paired Reading in the library on Wednesday and Friday mornings, and have become fantastic mentors to students from Years 7 and 8.

Additionally, ten Year 12 students have recently been appointed the sixth form leadership position of becoming LRC Ambassadors. Congratulations to: Domini-ka K, Shanet G, Sienna M, Niya R, Felicity T, Jesse E, Sophia F, Sienna D, Georgina E, and Stella C. We look forward to working with you next term.

### Book Challenge and Clubs

As annually, Year 10 students began working on their six-book challenge at the beginning of October half term. They are aiming to read at least six books between October and February half term and collect raffle tickets to potentially win a prize when the raffle is drawn at the end of February half term. All forms have also received their form texts to read once a week during morning registration in order to grow and maintain our community of reading.

Clubs additionally made a comeback, with Story-writing Club, Journaling Club, and Upper School Book Society all run at the library. Upper School Book Society in particular read 5 books this term and recently participated in a lively book swap!



At the very beginning of the term, Year 7 and Year 12 pupils received their library inductions. Year 7 students were introduced to the library's cataloguing system; where to find books and the various genres available to them. They also selected one book out of a selection of 16 titles to receive as a gift from the library, which, as always, was an exciting and welcoming initiative!

Year 12 students received a specialised introduction and workshop on academic integrity; how to avoid plagiarism and complete textual references and bibliographies correctly. They were also introduced to many academic sources and research subscriptions available to them through our library, and showed a huge amount of initiative and care when practicing their new skills.



*Journaling Club group photo*

## National Poetry Day

One of the key dates of Michaelmas term was National Poetry Day on 2 October. However, our school celebrations of this key literary date lasted all week long! Throughout the week, students very eagerly participated in an Influential Poets Scavenger Hunt, looking for posters of influential poets hung all around the school; a Poetry Quote Decorating Workshop; and a Chain Poetry event.

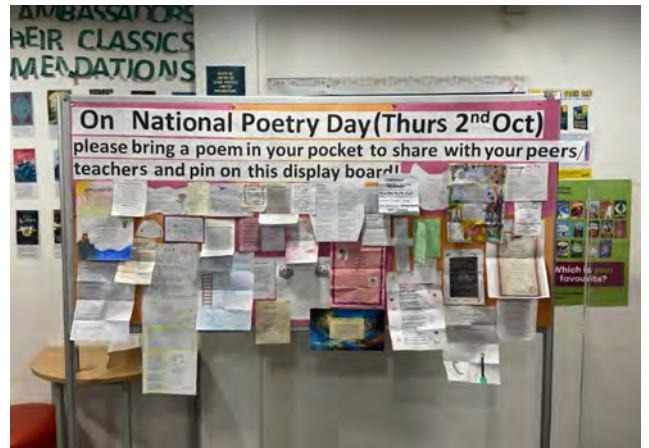
Students browsed poetry book recommendations, borrowed poetry books from the library, and had the opportunity to attend a Poetry Writing Workshop as well as a specialised talk on the practical importance of poetry.



*Influential Poets Scavenger hunt winners*



Both students and staff submitted their favourite poems to the library which were displayed in the cloisters for everyone in our school community to see. On the day itself, students and staff brought a poem in their pocket! Poems were decorated and displayed in the library and a poetry writing event took place at lunch time.



## Solving Mysteries and Cracking Codes, with Robin Stevens



On Wednesday 10 December, all Year 7 students attended a live Zoom Webinar with author Robin Stevens titled 'Solve Mysteries and Crack codes with Robin Stevens'.

During this webinar, Stevens shared her own journey of becoming an author, discussed the art of writing murder mystery novels, and resolved a mystery with everyone attending.

It was a wonderful opportunity for pupils to witness an author discussing their novels live and exploring some of the processes that go into writing a book. It was a very enjoyable event and during the first break time after the webinar, students flooded the library to borrow Stevens' novels!

## Remembrance Day

Students further developed their creativity by hand-making poppies and writing letters to WW2 Veterans for Remembrance Day. To commemorate this key date in the calendar, the library hosted a special workshop to write letters of gratitude to our veterans, and students enthusiastically participated. All letters were sent to our veterans through The Not Forgotten organisation. The library also created a large display of poems from WW1 and WW2, enabling students to expand their knowledge on various war poets.



# Black History Month



All students attended assemblies in October to celebrate Black History Month. The theme for Black History Month UK 2025 was 'Standing Firm in Power and Pride', a powerful tribute to the resilience, strength, and unwavering commitment to progress that defines the Black community across the globe. This year, the theme highlights the profound contributions made by Black people be they leaders, activists, or pioneers who have shaped history, while also looking towards a future of continued empowerment, unity, and growth.

Read more about Black History Month [here](https://blackhistorymonth.org.uk).

In the library, Black History Month was celebrated by showing pupils different types of literature by Black authors and poets. Students borrowed books by Black poets and authors which were displayed alongside short descriptions. The library created displays of inspirational Black people and students browsed and took with them articles about notable historical and current figures in the Black community.

Students also participated in Young Writers' / *I Have a Dream* writing competition. *I Have a Dream* required pupils to write on their dreams, whether personal, social, or hypothetical, and many pupils opted for heart-warming images of peace, faith, and community-values which deeply resonate with Sacred Heart Education.



# Birmingham Study



Sacred Heart took part in a three-year national study with the University of Birmingham looking at free expression at school. The final project report was released in September with recommendations. The study examined the extent to which young people are supported to express themselves on race and faith equality issues at school.

# Obituary: Selma van de Perre

by alumnae Rosaleen McHugh and Yvonne Gallagher



Summer Garden Party, 2023



Mrs van de Perre, who taught Maths and Sociology at Sacred Heart in the 1970s, died peacefully on 20th October 2025, aged 103. Until recently, she was a regular attendee at Old Girls' events, and was proud of her association with the school.

By any standards - as any of you who have read her internationally bestselling memoir, "My Name Is Selma", will know - she lived an extraordinary life. It is a hair-raising read, as Selma was in the Dutch resistance against the Nazis and carried out countless extremely dangerous missions. At the time of her death, she was also the last Dutch survivor of the Ravensbruck concentration camp. Her parents, sister, grandmother, aunt, uncle and two cousins were murdered at Auschwitz and Sobibor. After the war she was decorated by the Dutch government in 1983 and again in 2021 for her resistance work. Amazingly, until she published her memoir (which she wrote at age 98), most of us were completely unaware of her heroism, let alone that she had been in a concentration camp or lost so many family members to the Nazis.

Born into a non-practising, liberal Dutch Jewish family, Selma was 17 when the Nazis invaded the Netherlands (NL) in 1940. She successfully avoided an early Nazi order to work in a factory which supplied the German army, but her father was arrested in 1942, she helped her mother and sister go into hiding and she was left alone to fend for herself.

To avoid detection, and pass as an Aryan, Selma dyed her hair blonde and assumed a new name and identity. Throughout the war she went by her assumed name, Margareta (Marga) van der Kuit, and only felt safe to reveal her real name after liberation, once she was safely in Sweden (hence the title of her book).

Selma went into hiding and eventually found lodgings with two women, who it transpired were active in the Dutch resistance. This is when Selma's resistance work began. Her role involved the heart-pounding work of carrying resistance messages and reports round the NL and into Belgium and France, and often travelling with a suitcase full of fake identity papers, cash and ration papers for resistance workers.

One of her most dangerous assignments was to get into the German HQ in Paris, under the noses of the Nazis, in order to

obtain papers to be handed over to a contact. "I decided to flirt with the soldiers at the entrance, creating an impression I needed to deliver something to a relative, a brother perhaps" she said. Her success in this mission saved many lives. Another hair-raising mission involved stealing identity papers from the pocket of a German officer whom she had to befriend, to help the resistance infiltrate bases where their fighters were being kept.

Inevitably, Selma's luck ran out and in 1944, at the age of 22, she was arrested and imprisoned, initially in the notorious Vught concentration camp in the Netherlands. Her forced labour included working on a military production line, where she quickly learned how to sabotage production, leaving screws loose so the masks would be ineffective. Later in 1944 she was deported by cattle truck to Ravensbruck, where she was brutally treated, suffering beatings, near-fatal disease, and starvation.

Liberation finally came in April 1945, though initially when the women were lined up and marched across the camp by uniformed soldiers, they thought they were about to be killed. Instead, they were met by the Red Cross and taken to safety in Gothenburg (although Selma only narrowly escaped death on the way, when the Allies mistakenly bombed the convoy, killing many of the newly-liberated). Tragically, she was soon to learn that her family members had been murdered by the Nazis. But she was eventually reunited with her two brothers, who had made it to London and arranged for her to join them.

In London, Selma was recruited by the BBC for its Dutch section, based at Bush House, mainly typing scripts and recording for broadcast where a female voice was needed. It was here that she met her husband, Hugo Van de Perre, a Flemish journalist, who had fought in the resistance. They married in 1955 and had a son, Jocelin, in 1957. They had an extremely happy marriage until Hugo's sudden and untimely death in 1979. They were among the first in Britain to own a campervan and spent many happy family summers touring Europe in it.

During her early years in London, Selma took night classes in English and Sociology, and studied for a Sociology and Anthropology degree at the prestigious London School of Economics,

## Obituary: Selma van de Perre *continued*

graduating whilst heavily pregnant. She then qualified as a teacher and eventually found her way to Sacred Heart, where she was a Maths teacher for girls up to 'O' level (now GCSE). Later, never being afraid of a challenge, she also set up the Sociology Department.

After Hugo's death in 1979, Selma took over his job as a journalist, initially in addition to her day job as a Maths teacher, and then exclusively, which was when she left Sacred Heart. She was a cultural correspondent for several Dutch and Belgian media outlets, reporting mainly on British art and cultural life. This took her to many fascinating opening nights and events, including sitting behind a young and boisterous Prince William at Andrew and Fergie's wedding in 1986! She finally retired from journalism at the age of 83.

Not that she was to rest on her laurels in retirement. She started playing golf in her 80s; was an excellent painter (for her 100th birthday she exhibited and auctioned off her paintings for charity), and was a keen bridge player. She had a large and devoted circle of friends and, until recently, lunched regularly with some Old Girls and Miss Langmuir (aka Sandy Brown) and Mrs Lakomy.

She represented the Resistance for many years at the Netherlands annual Remembrance Day, up to her late 90s. From 1995 to 2022 she visited Ravensbruck every year to tell her life story to students and encourage them to think for themselves and not just follow "the man on the soapbox". In her later years she dedicated herself to Holocaust memorial and educational projects, and she appeared on TV and radio in many different countries. In the UK one of her most recent appearances on British TV was on Channel 4's "WW2: Women on the Front Line" in August 2024.

In her 90s Selma developed macular degeneration and gradually lost most of her eyesight, which sadly put an end to her art and bridge, but she found solace in continuing to give interviews, listening to talking books and Andre Rieu whenever he was on TV, and in the company of her devoted circle. Weather permitting, she went for a walk every day in her local square, St Peter's, where she lived for over 60 years. As an ardent sun-worshipper, who only had to look at the sun to go brown, she loved sitting on her favourite bench, soaking up the rays.

For my year group (Yvonne) she was the middle set Maths teacher and she taught me for four years. She was a standout personality in school. She had a very striking appearance and style - chic and firmly ahead of her time in a period to which the adjective "stylish" would perhaps not be readily applied. With her berets, ankle boots, knitted dresses and snazzy two-piece suits she cut quite a dash. She was a big fan of Marlene Dietrich and was fond of a joke in geometry lessons that she was teaching us about the blue angle and not the Blue Angel (a 1940s musical RomCom starring Marlene Dietrich). From that she could easily be distracted to chat about Marlene for the remainder of the lesson rather than bore us with geometry - surely a relief to all.

Looking back on those days, it's impossible not to be struck by the fact that the end of the war was barely 30 years earlier,

but to teenagers of the time it felt as distant as the dinosaurs. For Mrs van de Perre, who had endured fear, and persecution and loss of the most extreme kind, if our lack of appreciation for how lucky we were grated, it never showed. As far as I recall, she never spoke in lessons of her wartime experiences - I only became aware of them much later, as I am sure was the case for many of us, after her book was published.

Asked to articulate a piece of advice for our generation she was quoted as saying: "I'd like to recommend tolerance. But not necessarily in the political sense. Try to be tolerant of people around you. People in your life. Avoid fights. Fights become conflicts and conflicts become wars. Try to be nice. Love is all that matters in the end." She also wanted people to think for themselves, and not just follow the herd and to do, not just talk.

During the war she was an incredible example of courage and resistance. After the war she was an incredible example of resilience and recovery. She showed that, no matter what horrors one has endured, it can be possible to have not just a good, but a wonderful, meaningful life. In extreme old age, dealing with her loss of sight and limited mobility, she was a shining example of positivity, interest in others and style, still regularly having her hair and nails done at the age of 103.

Let us salute Mrs van de Perre, whose courage will never be forgotten, and who will always be remembered.

We would love to hear your memories of her for future publication of Cloisters

*Rosaleen McHugh (1974-1981) and Yvonne Gallagher (1973-80)*

'I remember her telling us in one lesson about her friendship with Helen Keller. We hadn't heard of Helen Keller and she explained about Helen's life being deaf and mute and how she wanted to succeed in life. We were enthralled, and much more interesting than maths!'

*Angie Dolan, alumna.*

## Imperial College Proto-Maker Challenge Winners!



A group of Year 8 students have won the Imperial College Proto-Maker Challenge 2025, coming in first place across all schools in Hammersmith and Fulham. The Proto-Maker Challenge is a STEM-based design and making programme for Y7-Y9 class groups.

Our students designed a sea robot that cleans up ocean pollutants by removing litter and plastic debris. As a result, the school will receive a 3D printer and a gift experience for the winning students.

Thank you very much to Imperial College for this amazing opportunity and well done to Victoria Z, Rayah B, Zoe L, Mia T and Juliette M for this amazing achievement!

## Charles Dickens Museum Trip



Over the last two weeks, five Year 10 English classes travelled to Russell Square to visit the Charles Dickens Museum to support their study of *A Christmas Carol*.

At the museum, students were split into groups and were taught all about the world Charles Dickens was living in when he wrote his novels. They learnt about his childhood, his time spent working in factories, and his life as a writer in London. Students also explored what life was like in Victorian workhouses, which were designed to house and support the poor during this era.

The highlight of the trip was the guided tour of Charles Dickens' house. From the servants' quarters to the drawing room, complete with festive Christmas decorations, students were able to fully immerse themselves in Dickens' life and times. They even saw the room where *A Christmas Carol* was written, as well as a section of the original draft, which was particularly exciting.

Our students were incredibly respectful throughout the visits and engaged enthusiastically with the activities and discussions. The trip was a fantastic opportunity to bring their learning to life, and we are confident it will greatly enrich their understanding of Dickens' work back in the classroom.

## Y12 Trip to Parliament



On Friday 12 December Year 12 History and Politics students attended Parliament for a tour and a workshop. During their tour they observed peers in the House of Lords addressing amendments to the Assisted Dying Bill.

This provided an invaluable insight into the legislative process.

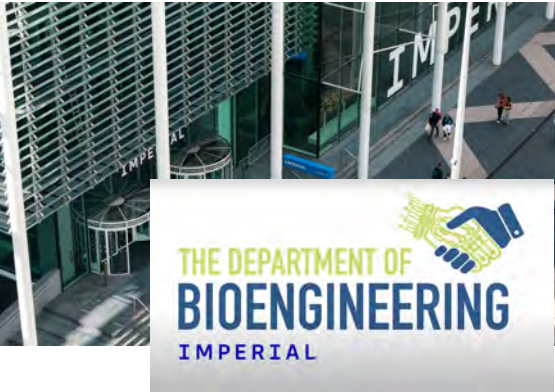
## Physics in Action



A-Level Physics and BTEC students attended *Physics in Action*, an inspiring event that takes physics beyond the classroom. Top physicists and expert communicators shared their passion and insight across a range of exciting topics, showing students where physics can take them in study, research, and future careers.

Our Year 13s had the opportunity to talk to leading scientists in fields related to their university course choices next year. Winnie O spoke with Kate Shaw, an Experimental Particle Physicist at the University of Sussex, about space and dark matter. Vanessa NG had a conversation with Anna Ploszajski, a Materials Scientist, about the rapid development of new materials. The day also included a special session on exam success, giving students practical tools and tips to help them excel in their KS5 exams.

## Imperial Bio Engineering talk



A group of Year 12 students went to Imperial College for the day to discover more about bio-engineering in higher education.

*The highlight of my trip to Imperial College was learning about molecular food bioengineering. The guest speaker began by asking us to think about our favourite meal and how it might not be as easy to come by in 2040, with the global population expected to reach around 10 billion people. I was especially fascinated by how the first-year undergraduate students made their own lab-grown ice cream. It felt almost futuristic to imagine making ice cream without cows or natural ingredients. I loved the idea that something so innovative could soon become part of everyday life.*

Kaitlyn F

*At first, my knowledge of 'bioengineering' was limited, but as the lecture progressed, we were exposed to more and more information of how it is used and why it is important. I found the lectures incredibly interesting and vital to me as I am particularly interested in **biomedical sciences**. The lectures more than exceeded my expectations and I am glad to say that I have learnt something out of it.*

Maiia A

## Maths Inspiration



A group of Year 11, 12 and 13 students visited Cambridge Theatre to watch *Maths Inspiration* in action. They watched some brilliant interactive talks from various mathematicians who really brought maths to life using real-world applications.

Earlier this term, St. Paul's Boys' School invited 7 high-achieving and enthusiastic Year 9 students from Sacred Heart to participate in a Maths Competition. The students were competing in mixed groups giving them an opportunity to build teamwork skills and make new friends. From the winning group of four students, Sacred Heart was represented by Josephine Y G.

## Fashion Show at the Irish Cultural Centre



At the end of September, a group of Year 8 and Year 9 Sacred Heart students took part in a Fashion Show and Auction at the Irish Culture Centre (ICC) in Hammersmith. The event was fully sold out, with people of all ages enjoying canapes, traditional Irish folk and a unique runway show.

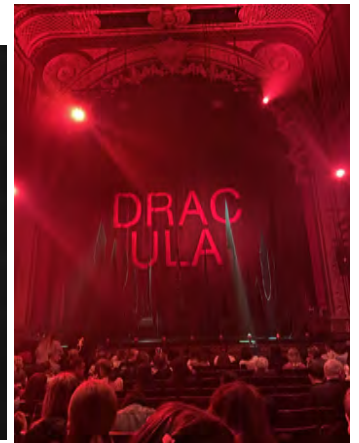
Our students were fitted in upcycled pieces and vintage bridal designs from an acclaimed Irish designer, showing-off each piece for the silent auction at the end of the night. The money raised will contribute to the continued support of Irish diaspora through cultural events and education programmes at the centre, as well as its planned expansion.

You can read more about the impact of multigenerational events and resources like the ICC in [this article](#) about the Fashion Show and Auction, published by The Irish Times.

# A very theatrical Autumn term for the Drama Department!

This term saw the GCSE and A-Level Drama students enjoy a range of trips to the theatre and a workshop from renowned devising theatre company BoxHouse Theatre.

## Dracula at the Lyric Hammersmith



## Back to the Future at the Adelphi Theatre



## Hedda Gabler at the Orange Tree Theatre Richmond



## BoxHouse Theatre Workshop

BoxHouse Theatre are a company that have gained in popularity over the past two years and have just finished a jam packed Asian tour! They specialise in creating fast-paced and highly physical shows that are all performed on a stage the size of a gym mat!

Year 10 and Year 12/13 participating in an intensive two hour workshop where the company shared their techniques and top-tips to help them with their own upcoming devised pieces.



## Macbeth



LAMDA Drama MA students came to give a performance of *Macbeth* to all our Year 11 pupils just before half-term. *Macbeth* is their set GCSE text. Afterwards they had a Q&A session talking about the characters, the directorial decisions made for this production and their own routes into drama from school and university. What an incredible opportunity to see 'The Scottish Play' (!) close up.

## Hamlet at the National Theatre

In November, a group of Year 12 and 13 Drama and English students went to see a matinee performance of *Hamlet* at the National Theatre.

This follows a visit to the RSC in Stratford to see another production last Spring. Trips like these aim to develop our students' comparison and critical assessment skills, and deepen their understanding of English and Drama A-Level texts.

### Library talk about Hamlet



For sixth form, Miss Spek gave a talk about *Hamlet* by William Shakespeare. Having specialised in Shakespeare, Miss Spek visited English A-level students studying *Hamlet* to discuss the play's textual and performance history and offer many insights into the history of interpretation, the making of the *Hamlet* text that we use today, directorial intention, key performances, and the ever-lasting enigma of the character of Hamlet himself. It was a particularly busy hour, but a 'very enjoyable' one, as Françoise our Head Girl stated afterwards.



# Launch of the Sacred Heart Enrichment Programme

## Autumn 2025



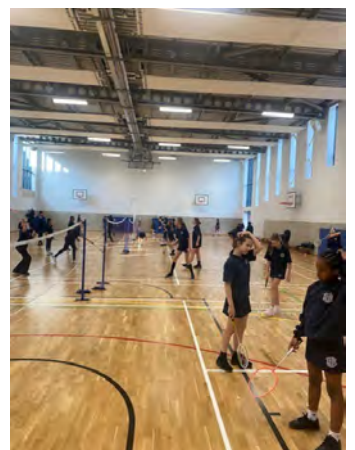
This Autumn term saw the beginning of the first Sacred Heart Enrichment Programme that featured over 50 clubs, workshops, trips and activities for students to participate in. An astounding 700 students signed up to participate and enjoyed enrichment activities ranging from Cheerleading to the Philosophy Society to a Maths Inspiration show at the Cambridge Theatre, Irish Dancing and much more!

Congratulations to all students for showing commitment and personal growth in trying new enrichment activities and a big thank you to Sacred Heart staff for facilitating!

### Autumn Awards for Enrichment

Congratulations to all! These students received a certificate and an enrichment badge for their efforts this term.

Year	Outstanding participation and attendance	Encouragement Award for personal growth and perseverance in their chosen activities.
7	Eva C Leonie C -D'H	Aoibheann B – Irish Dancing Fitness Annabel H-H -Netball
8	Rose G-P Charlotte D	Sabrina M-R – Performing Arts Alanna M - Dance
9	Clara C Teresa L	Vesa B – Debating Oliwia P – Journalling Club
10	Uso A Valery H	Sochi O-O – Basketball Luisa L – Upper School Book Society
11	Christabel B Maame L	Gabriella S and Taina M –LAMDA Olivia M-N – Rowing
12	Gabriella Q and Alexia Q	
13	Rosaleen C and Mailys K	



## Spring Enrichment



### Sign-Up

Unless otherwise stated, students can sign up to each activity using the Google Form located on their form class Google Classroom. The closing date for sign-up is **Friday 19th December 2025**. **Enrichment will begin on Monday 15th January 2026.**



### Get in quick!

Some activities have limited spaces. Places will be allocated based on the first students to sign up. When students sign up, their choices are 'time stamped' by Google to enable staff to see who signed up first.



### Consistent Participation and Attendance

By signing up to participate in an enrichment activity students are making a commitment to attend every session associated with that enrichment activity. Attendance will be monitored by the teachers in charge via EduLink registers. A one week grace period will be given in the first week of enrichment. After that, students are not permitted to quit activities.



### Rewards

Consistent participation and attendance will be rewarded through a badge system at year level assemblies.



Our wonderful Enrichment Programme continues this Spring term with another fantastic offering of clubs, workshops, trips and activities. Some activities will continue; with the addition of some new and exciting ones!

Instructions on how to sign up for Spring are on the left.

It is important to note that even if you participated last term, you need to sign up again for the Spring term.



## Psychology trip to London Zoo

Just before half term, Year 12 & 13 Psychology students went to London Zoo to carry out a research project observing animal behaviour.

Pupils were taught how zoo keepers classically condition the animals when training them and were tasked to record animal behaviour using special iPads.

Some of the enclosures were open to students, who sat and interacted with lemurs and colobus monkeys as they collected behavioural data. One student reflected:

*"I thought it was really interesting to observe the animal's behavior, especially the monkeys because they're very similar to humans"*

## We remember Pauline Collins



Pauline Collins (who died at the age of 85 on 6 November 2025) was a student here and later became an accomplished actress. She found fame as Shirley Valentine, the housewife who escapes to Greece.

Having played this part in the original one-woman play, she was Oscar nominated for the film.

Her family said in a statement:

We are heartbroken to announce that Pauline Collins died peacefully at her care home in Highgate this week, having endured Parkinson's for several years. She was surrounded by her family.

Pauline was so many things to so many people, playing a variety of roles in her life. A bright, sparky, witty presence on stage and screen. Her illustrious career saw her play politicians, mothers and queens.

She will always be remembered as the iconic, strong-willed, vivacious and wise Shirley Valentine - a role that she made all her own. We were familiar with all those parts of her because her magic was contained in each one of them.

More than anything, though, she was our loving mum, our wonderful grandma and great-grandma. Warm, funny, generous, thoughtful, wise, she was always there for us. And she was John (Alderton)'s life-long love. A partner, work collaborator, and wife of 56 years.

We particularly want to thank her carers: angels who looked after her with dignity, compassion, and most of all love. She could not have had a more peaceful goodbye. We hope you will remember her at the height of her powers; so joyful and full of energy; and give us the space and privacy to contemplate a life without her."

## Memories from an Alumna, Brenda Barry

now Dr Bridget Jackson [www.bridgetjacksonart.com](http://www.bridgetjacksonart.com)

Hearing about the death of Pauline Collins prompted alumna Brenda (Bridget Jackson) and her husband Dr Peter Jackson to contact the school. Brenda had been friendly with Pauline when they were members of Mrs Hodgson's Drama Society at Sacred Heart in the late 1950s.

Although born in England both Brenda and Pauline came from Irish families. Pauline left first, going to Central School of Speech and Drama while Brenda went on to Goldsmiths Art School to be a painter and use her middle name Bridget.

Bridget met her husband in Goldsmiths Drama Society and later married. After graduation Bridget taught drawing at an Architecture School and illustrated books before moving into design, eventually becoming the first woman Principal of Chelsea College of Art and Design.

She and her husband always followed Pauline's career. By a very strange coincidence Pauline was Peter's own childhood friend in Wallasey in the late 1940s.



Photo by Jill Benado



## Lady Freud, June (Jill) Flewett

We also remember alumna Jill Flewett, later Lady Freud, widow of Clement Freud who died aged 98 on 24 November 2025. She an actress, theatre director and mother-in-law of Richard Curtis.

She was CS Lewis' inspiration for the character Lucy in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*.

Her daughter Emma Freud said "Lucky old Heaven – getting such a dazzling newcomer".

## Fantastic 'Writing Piece of the Week'

A new library initiative was introduced at the beginning of this year and had become particularly popular is our Word/Poem/Writing Piece of the Week.

Every Monday morning, a new word, poem, and a writing piece produced by one of our students is posted on Google Classroom and hung up on our library display board. Students have been enjoying inspecting the display board every week to find their peers' writing pieces, as well as getting to know various new words and poems posted on Google Classroom.

### *Those Eyes* Suspense thriller by Athena O



Finally, Henry, Jane, Charlie and I were in the car to our friend Lucy's party. Charlie, my annoying big brother, was forced against his own will by mum to drive me and my friends to the party.

"Are we there yet?" I asked, nudging Charlie on the shoulder. He side-eyed me, thinking he could scare me- like that would ever happen!

PPFFFFTTT! The car suddenly slowed to a halt, leaving us in the middle of the countryside- the fuel had run out.

Henry groaned "We'll never get to Lucy's party now!" Charlie got out of the car, got the emergency supplies from the boot and gave us all a hard stare. "We're camping out, hold the groan."

BANG! Something smashed into the car as Jane screamed, Henry yelled, and Charlie was knocked out of the way. I saw bloodshot eyes stare through the window, sending deep shivers down my spine. I couldn't move - I was too scared. Suddenly, I felt a sharp pain in my head as I was knocked out cold...



### *Hope* by Margaret W (Y9)

Hope is a songbird.  
It nestles in your soul,  
and spreads its wings.  
And one it starts singing—it never stops.

Hope is like an aged clock.  
It's rough and raw,  
but stands tall.

Hope is like fire.  
It's dangerous and relentless,  
But a single spark can light up the dark.

Hope is the line between sea and sky—  
far away, but always there,  
no matter how the tide pulls.

Hope is like wind,  
I can't see it, but it moves the leaves.  
That's how I know it's there.

Hope is the only thing winter can't thaw.





## *I Have a Dream* Young Writers' poetry competition

Fantastic and very different entries by Gifty Y and Laura B

### *I Have a Dream*

I have a dream,  
To become somebody someday,  
To change the lives of others,  
To fight for what is right,  
To work hard,  
To make my family proud

I have a dream,  
To give the advice I once yearned for,  
For everyone to have an education,  
For everyone to live in peace and unity,  
No war,  
No conflict,  
No hunger,  
An end to poverty

I have a dream,  
I hope will one day come true,  
I pray and trust that it will one day,  
But for now,  
I have a dream,  
I don't know when it shall come to pass,  
However, what I do know is that,  
I have a dream

by Gifty Y (Y8)

### *A Dream to Heal (or my White Coat Dream)*

I have a dream, big and bright,  
Born from hospital halls and a sleepless night.  
A dream to heal, to calm each fear,  
To help keep everyone safe and near.  
I know the sting of what can harm,  
The hidden danger I've felt myself.  
I've felt the fear, my throat so tight,  
So I want to help, to heal, to care,  
To turn each tear into a dare.  
One day I'll wear that bright white coat,  
Helping others is my greatest hope.  
I have a dream, it lives in me,  
It's true and clear — it's what I want to be!

by Laura B (Y7)

## Sacred Heart Rowers make waves in the early mornings!



This autumn–winter term has been an exciting and inspiring start to the rowing season at Fulham Reach Boat Club. We've welcomed a fantastic group of new students to the programme, including enthusiastic Year 9s picking up an oar for the first time and new students from KS4 and 5 also eager to dive into the sport. Their energy, curiosity, and willingness to learn have brought a brilliant new spirit to the teams.

Each term, we love seeing our returning rowers back on the water. Their continued dedication, resilience, and enthusiasm set the tone for the whole squad. Whether braving crisp early mornings or pushing through challenging technical sessions, their commitment to rowing has been nothing short of outstanding.



Rowing remains one of the most powerful contributors to students' academic success. The discipline, focus, time management, and teamwork developed through training translate directly into the classroom. This term, our students have shown how the habits built on the river including perseverance, concentration, and the drive to improve, support them in becoming stronger learners and more confident young people.

We are incredibly proud of every student who has taken part in rowing this term. Their progress on the water and their positive mindset off it reflect the strength of the programme and the fantastic support of the coaches at Fulham Reach Boat Club.

Here's to a brilliant start to the year and to even more growth, teamwork, and success as the season continues.



# Sport at SHHS

## *A fantastic term of participation & commitment*

This term at SHHS has been a hugely successful one for sport, with a wide range of clubs running throughout the term. Students have had the opportunity to take part in Dance, Netball, Badminton, Football, Cheerleading, Volleyball, Running Club and Basketball, ensuring there was something for everyone to enjoy.

We have seen an amazing turnout across all activities, with large numbers attending consistently. It has been particularly encouraging to see the commitment shown by the girls, who have demonstrated enthusiasm and a real dedication to training each week

### Basketball Club

Our basketball teams represented the school in a tournament involving a number of other schools. Both senior teams performed exceptionally well, progressing through to the third round before being knocked out in closely contested matches. Our Year 7 and 8 team also took part and, despite being knocked out in the first round, gained valuable competitive experience.



### Netball Club

Netball has been another busy area this term, with fixtures across all year groups against West London Free School, St James, St Benedict's and Lady Margaret. These matches resulted in a mixture of wins and losses, providing great opportunities for development, teamwork and sportsmanship.



### Volleyball Club

Volleyball has been a new addition to the array of clubs offered at SHHS, and has proven to be very popular. Students have been learning to dig, set and hit, and enjoyed learning the skills of volleyball.

### Running Club

Well done to all the young runners who show up every Monday morning at 7.45. The club has grown since it was started

back in September 2024, and now we have at least 25 regular runners come along, what a great way to start the school week.

### Cheerleading Club

This term we introduced cheerleading with an external coach for the first time, providing an amazing experience for the girls. They have embraced the sessions fully, showing great enthusiasm and a love for learning new skills. Cheerleading has quickly become a popular and exciting addition to our sports programme.

### Football Club

Football continues to be a popular Wednesday club at SHHS, led by an external coach from The Sporting Duet Academy. The girls thoroughly enjoy the sessions and are developing their skills, confidence and understanding of the game each week

### Wimbledon Ball Girls

This term we carefully nominated seven students to trial for the Wimbledon Ball Girl programme. The girls have shown outstanding commitment, attending training sessions at 7:30am on Wednesday and Friday mornings. Their dedication and skill development over the term has been amazing to see. A special thank you to our experienced Ball Girls from last year, Beatrice W and Olivia M N, for their fantastic commitment and support in helping to train and guide the girls.

We are incredibly proud of the commitment and enthusiasm shown by all the girls this term and are already looking forward to another exciting term of clubs and fixtures ahead.

### Dance Club

Dance club runs on Mondays and Tuesdays and it has been fantastic to see the girls' movement and flow improving week by week. See more overleaf.



# Sacred Heart Dance Company

This term, pupils in the intermediate and advanced dance groups have explored a wide range of styles, including lyrical, contemporary, liturgical dance, commercial, capoeira, jazz, and musical theatre, alongside dance improvisation and devising choreography.

Students have taken on roles such as dance captains, dance administration, and costume designers, with many leading warm-ups and sharing movement they have created themselves. This has supported confidence, responsibility, and collaboration within the group.

More recently, pupils have been creating a new dance piece inspired by nature and the environment, rooted in *Laudato Si' - Caring for Our Common Home* and the *Canticle of the Creatures*. Drawing on tribal influences, lyrical contemporary, Graham and Humphrey techniques, and improvisation, the dance work explores growth, struggle, and renewal.

Through embodying elements of the natural world, pupils reflect on climate change, sustainability, and our responsibility to care for creation. The project has enabled meaningful cross-curricular links with Geography, Religious Education, English, Art, and Drama. Students have also been designing costumes using sketchbooks, with the intention of making them next term.

Overall, this has been a powerful and reflective learning experience for the dance group, using dance to explore identity, leadership, and care for our world.

## Our new dance piece entitled *Canticle of the Seed*



## Doris Humphrey technique 'rise and fall'



## Dance improvisation



## Dance choreography



# Pyjama Day & the Amazing Staff Christmas Music Video!

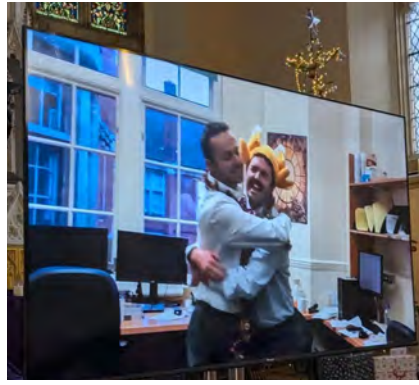


All staff and students were encouraged to come to school in pyjamas on 16 December in return for making a contribution to our Christmas charities, **The Passage** and **Alice's Arc**.

At lunch time (and for a small donation) girls gathered in the chapel to watch the highly anticipated staff music video which was greeted with laughter and glee.

It's moments like these that bring joy to all our lives. Thank you so much to the staff for their exemplary musical dance performances!!

Fundraising from these events and from the candy cane messengers and the Christmas Fair together raised **over £3,000!**



## A Conversation with CAFOD about Sudan

On 15 December we were blessed to attend an online meeting organised by Beata Rozycka, an alumna who now works for CAFOD. The meeting was organised in response to Aryam Bokru, Year 11, who expressed concern about the impact of the war in Sudan and a desire to do something in response to the people's suffering.

Fatima Salih, the CAFOD representative from Sudan explained the cause of the conflict and the different initiatives CAFOD is leading in Sudan to relieve the suffering of the people. Our students made a commitment to further educate people about the work of CAFOD in the Spring Term and to organise a fund-raising event to support their work.

*Ms Maton*



## Y8 Retreat



In October, our Year 8's took pause to reflect on important questions about themselves and their relationships with God.

In the middle of a busy term, when there are many pressures and changes, students had the opportunity to just stop for a while and to focus on the friendship and faith that surrounds them.

In order to facilitate this, a retreat programme was developed by our Chaplain with four reflective and prayerful sessions facilitated by our staff and one of the Deacons from Westminster diocese. All students took part in the sessions, working alongside other members of their tutor groups in activities like necklace-building pictured left.



## A Final Word

I wish every one of you a joyous and restful Christmas and a happy new year.

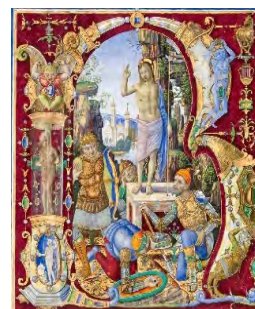
With thanks for your continued support of the school.

With best wishes and prayers,

*S. Donohue*

Key Dates listed overleaf





## LENT TERM

JANUARY 2026		
Monday	05	All students return
Monday	12	Mock exams all week for Year 11 & Year 13 Y13 BTEC Applied Science & Business exams
Friday	16	Y13 BTEC Business exams
Monday	19	Mock exams all week for Year 11 & Year 13
Thursday	29	Year 12 Parent Teacher Meeting 4-6pm
FEBRUARY 2024		
Thursday	05	Year 9 Parent teacher Meeting 4-6pm
Thursday	12	The Nunnery at Hammersmith talk & exhibition, 7pm tickets on Connect (sacredheartconnect.com) in aid of cloister paintings fund.
Friday	13	PTFA Valentine Sweet Cup collection 3-4pm (purchase earlier on Connect)
HALF TERM Monday 16 Feb-Friday 20 Feb inclusive		
Monday	23	All students return to school
Tuesday	24	Y7-11 Dance –Giselle ballet Trip
Thursday	26	The Brilliant Club graduation even King's College, London Y10 Parent Teacher Meeting 4-7pm
Friday	27	EPQ Presentations 3.00-6.30pm
MARCH 2024		
Monday	02	Y12 Mock exams all week
Wednesday	04	Y12 Jekyll & Hyde trip Careers Fair
Thursday	05	World Book Day
Thursday	12	Y9 OPTIONS EVENING 5pm
Friday	13	Y7 Disco (tickets available on Connect)
Friday	20	Vivaldi's Gloria (grand fundraising concert for the organ - our girls singing and playing with an international opera soprano and renowned trumpeter) Tickets available on Connect from mid Jan. Masterclass earlier in the day.
Monday	23	Y12 UCAS Discovery Fair
Wednesday	25	Rome trip departs
Thursday	26	Ski Trip departs Lent Liturgy 6-7.15pm, parents welcome, free tickets will be available on Connect
Friday	27	Term ends at 1pm
EASTER HOLIDAYS		
APRIL 2024		
Monday	13	Students return to school