

Welcome to the March 2019 edition of our Newsletter.

I am delighted to take this opportunity to introduce the next installment of our Newsletter. Within this edition, you will find just a small flavour of some of the excellent work and extra-curricular enrichment that are evident each day at St John's.

Many thanks to all those staff who continue to provide such wonderful opportunities for our pupils and congratulations to those students who go 'above and beyond' in adding to the wider life of the school. If you have got a mention, either individually or as part of a wider group, you should be very proud indeed of your achievement.

Now that spring is (hopefully) in the air, our focus as a school moves towards the Options process as well as preparing our KS4 & KS5 pupils for this summer's public examinations. If you do have a child in one of those key stages, I would encourage you to discuss the following examination tips with them; perhaps see how many they are already incorporating into their weekly schedule?

10 Top Tips for Revision

- 1) **Draw up a revision timetable** (20-30 minute spells work best)
- 2) **Exercise regularly** (this really does support positive mental health by reducing stress)
- 3) **Find a quiet space** (if this is not possible at home, then perhaps at school or the library)
- 4) **Get down to your study early** (rather than putting it off until later)
- 5) **Spice up your revision** (create colourful, eye-catching notes that make you want to read them)
- 6) **Do plenty of past papers** (teachers - just ask them - and Google can help with this)
- 7) **Make summary notes** (often the best way of memorizing information)
- 8) **Reward yourself** (try to establish a positive work-life balance)
- 9) **Use family and friends** (to test you and give you feedback)
- 10) **Think positively!** (if you do your best, your best is good enough)

Best wishes to all those pupils undertaking examinations this summer. As a school, we will do our absolute best to support you whilst keeping you in our thoughts and prayers.

Matt Barron *Headteacher*



The school musical this year was Legally Blonde with performances taking place on the 13th and 14th February. The Performing Arts department would like to congratulate all students involved on their superb performances, we are extremely proud of their achievements and look forward to offering the opportunity of performing in a Musical to all students in the next academic year.

NATIONAL YOUTH PARLIAMENT

Last November a 6th Form student Gabby Stere was elected onto the Kent Youth Parliament. She was elected from the Gravesham and Dartford District and by students attending schools in Gravesham and Dartford. Gabby is among those who attend the Kent Youth Parliament in Maidstone on a fortnightly basis, focusing on issues affecting students and youth in the County. Gabby impressed a great deal and, as a result, was nominated to be in the running for the National Youth Parliament. This meets on a regular basis in the House of Commons in Westminster with the Speaker of the Commons, Mr John Bercow MP acting as Speaker for the National Youth Parliament.

Having been nominated Gabby had to progress through a selection process which included an interview and voting. She was among the 7 elected from the Kent Youth Parliament to represent Kent in the National Youth Parliament.

A singular honour and congratulations!

Mr C Murphy *Head of History*

Westminster visit



Ten A Level students studying Politics visited the Houses of Parliament in mid-January. This visit took place on the day prior to the vote on Brexit proposals. The tour of Parliament allowed the students to visit the House of Commons & the House of Lords and was specific to the A Level course being studied. Organised by the Office of local MP Mr Adam Holloway we were greeted by Mr Holloway's assistant/aide/researcher who made us most welcome.

A thoroughly enjoyable, rewarding and educational visit.

Year 7 Battlefield Trip

No less than 94 Year 7 students travelled to Belgium just before Christmas on the annual World War 1 Battlefield Tour to Ypres in Belgium. The annual Christmas Tour usually has 45 students in one coach travelling but the demand was so high this year that we had to book a second coach and in the end 94 students travelled.

Our first stop was at 9 Elms Cemetery where a number of servicemen from Gravesend are buried in addition to the legendary All Black Rugby Captain, David Gallaher. From there it was on to Essex Farm Cemetery [John Macrae] and Passchendaele Museum with its myriad of underground rooms and bunkers. Onto Poelkapelle Cemetery [John Condon at 13 the youngest casualty], Spanbroekmolen Carter and Prowse Point where the Christmas Truce 1914 broke out and where the legendary Christmas Day 1914 Football Match took place. Back to Leper for the Christmas Market, skating and chocolate purchase and finally attendance at the Last Post Ceremony at the Menin Gate.

Everyone arrived back at School at 11pm, tired but a day full of education, learning and fun.

Mr C Murphy *Head of History*



BATTLE OF BRITAIN MEMORIAL VISIT

Fifteen students from the International Club, visited the Battle of Britain Memorial, Capel-le-Ferne in mid-January. The International Club is aimed at students whose heritage is from other countries and is run every Thursday by Mrs Perera. The focus of the visit was to draw attention to the contribution made by pilots in the Battle of Britain. These pilots came from Poland, the Czech Republic, France and elsewhere in Europe. The fifteen students along with Mrs Perera and Mr Murphy, were taken on a tour of the memorial site. The ongoing work of the students will be collated into a study on the contribution of these European pilots and of shared Heritage.



Mr Murphy *Head of History*

CHRISTMAS FAYRE

The annual Christmas Fayre was held just before Christmas and was a tremendous success. Organised this year by the History Society there were no less than 17 tables in the Heart Space with a variety of material, food and drink on offer during both lunchtimes to all students and staff. As usual the samosas from Mrs Rai proved most popular but so did the raffle stand, the Teddy Bear stand and the bric-a-brac stand.

Over £260 was raised for charity which will be donated later in the school year when combined with the proceeds from the staff charity cycle.

A thank you to all staff and students for supporting the venture.

Mr Murphy *Head of History*

St John's students exhibit in major art gallery



The prize-winning students from the John Downton exhibition have had their work transferred to the Turner Contemporary gallery in Margate where they are exhibiting alongside great artists such as JMW Turner himself! The students are: Jasneet, Mark, Ellie, Weronika, Simreet, Skye, Malanjhi.

This is a real achievement and will look fantastic on their CVs! It is opening for viewing until 24th February. Please check website for opening times.

<https://www.turnercontemporary.org/>

La Chandeleur

Year 10 French students were taken to the food tech room to cook crêpes. On the 2nd of February French people celebrate "la Chandeleur" and according to the tradition everyone has to make and eat the well-known crêpes on that day. I hope the year 10 pupils enjoyed this experience which allowed them to be a little bit more in contact with French culture.

Miss J Sanchez *Head of MFL*



7G Transition students visited the Royal Observatory.

The students had a fantastic day - full of information and activities. They were fortunate to be the only group in the planetarium show so were able to ask the astronomer lots of questions and, in turn, we were pleased to see that they were able to answer a lot from him! The study sessions were extremely educational, students were impeccably behaved, participated well and were great representatives of St John's. I only wish we had had more time to spend at this fantastic institution.

Mrs H Burgess *Transition Teacher*

Literary Legends

The Soul of War

A fight between nations,
Nations worldwide,
Love forgotten,
Hatred heartened,

Marching forward towards crossfire of night,
The fire within the living, extinguishes with fright,

Found at last, they steal away,
Their precious life is not here to stay.

Moving faster now through the silent shade,
The war continues searching for some hidden
certainty,

As a sea of stars light the way,
The soldiers fall forevermore.

By Miyah (Year 7)

Poppies

As the poppies dance,
In Flanders Field,
The sun slowly sets,
For another day.
Soldiers screaming,
Crying out for help,
Begging God for one last day.
As the green gas swims towards them,
They cry with fear and lose their eyes.
The poppies dance,
In Flanders Field.

By Hollie (Year 7)

THE BRITISH NORMANDY MEMORIAL



Four years ago Mr George Batts, who regularly visits the school to talk to the students on his experiences of World War 2, secured funding from the Government to assist with the realisation of a dream of his – to create a British Memorial in Normandy to commemorate the 22,442 servicemen who were killed in the campaign that started with the D-Day Landing on June 6th 1944 and finished with the routing of the German Army in late August 1944. After much effort and endeavour the project is finally off the ground with the Memorial being planned for Ver-sur-Mer near

Arromanches. The foundation stone and sculpture will be officially laid and unveiled on June 6th by HRH Prince Charles, accompanied by the Prime Minister and the President of France.

On Thursday 7th February the project was officially unveiled and initiated at the National Army Museum in London. Some 10 veterans were present with Mr Batts being guest of honour – he is also Patron of the Project. Mr Murphy, History Department, received an invitation and was among the 250 dignitaries present. Mr Murphy representing the School and accompanying Mr Batts.

More information on the project and how to donate to this worthy cause are online at the Normandy British Memorial Trust site - <http://www.normandymemorialtrust.org>

Mr C Murphy *Head of History*

Congratulations to the Gymnastics Squad

Congratulations to St. John's Gymnastics Squad who competed on 26th January in the Regional Team Trio competition, held at Tormead School, Surrey. Over 400 gymnasts from the South East region took part in the event, and the results were outstanding.

Under 16 Girls – 8th

Under 13 Girls – 6th

Under 13 Mixed – 3rd

Under 16 Mixed – 1st

Under 19 Boys – 1st

Under 19 Mixed – 1st

The latter 3 teams earned a place at the National Finals being held in Stoke-on-Trent in March 2019 to represent the South East Region.



Mrs L Weller *Assistant Headteacher*

Study Experience Trip to Disneyland, Paris

On Tuesday 4th February the Design & Technology department organised a three-day educational study experience trip to Disneyland, Paris aimed at promoting Engineering and inspiring students to look at the opportunities in Engineering and the range of careers available.

The trip proved very popular with 46 students and 5 staff members spending three days in France with time for the students to enjoy the two Disney theme parks and participate in an educational seminar. The seminar showed the cutting-edge technology that Disney uses in their rides and the range of materials that are selected for their main attractions. The seminar also highlighted the time and effort that goes into increasing the customer engagement through high quality theme rides and their attention to detail. This built on knowledge gained in lessons which also relates directly to the GCSE/BTEC criteria.

The seminar also reinforced the importance of all companies being eco-friendly with Disney committing to being plastic free by 2020 and the technology they have adopted to maintain rare types of plants and trees in both parks.

The students enjoyed high quality accommodation in the Cheyenne hotel and had the opportunity in the evening to spend time with their friends in the Disney village with a range of restaurants and shops.

Students conducted themselves exceptionally well throughout the trip and were excellent ambassadors for the school. Congratulations to all involved.

Mr Magee (Head of Year 9)



Why I chose A LEVEL Religious Studies?

I chose to study A level Religious Studies as I found the subject fascinating and I really liked the teachers who were teaching the subject. After studying the subject for over a year, my opinion on the subject hasn't changed. The overall subject is exciting and makes you question your way of thinking. During our Religious Studies lessons my class always has debates on our different views on a topic, this keeps the whole class focused and intrigued. Studying Religious Studies has boosted my self-confidence as we are often asked to present our work to the class. By doing class activities like these I have been able to step out of my comfort zone and develop a range of transferable skills.

I have grown as a person whilst studying this course and have developed a great deal of knowledge in this area. I have learnt to work in a group and, when required, work individually. After I leave sixth form, I am planning on studying Business Management at Westminster University. The skills that I have learnt whilst studying Religious Studies will help me with the various obstacles that I likely to face in my life. My debating skills and my self-confidence will allow me to face challenges at university in the future as well as the business workplace.

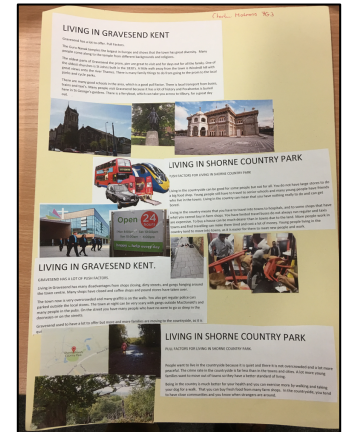
Manneet

Geography Topic Work

This term, Year 7 Geography pupils have been studying the topic of Britain with one of the main themes looking at Push and Pull factors for rural and urban areas.

One of the tasks set was to research the different push and pull factors associated with Gravesend and Shorne Country Park. Pupils took the opportunity to explore why people might be 'pulled' to an urban environment such as Gravesend and 'pushed' out of a rural location similar to Shorne Country Park.

Using their knowledge of urban and rural environments, a link was also made to key phrases such as population density and sparsity. Many of the Year 7s used their experiences of visiting the country park to make up their minds whether they would be 'pushed' from this rural location deciding that a lack of jobs, transport and entertainment made Gravesend a more attractive location to live. The opportunities for shopping, the skate park and bus links to Bluewater were clearly identified as a 'pull' factor to an urban area.



Some great homework was produced by Ethan, Karina and Ruby. Well done to all the pupils in 7G/GG3 for their hard work and effort in this topic!

Mr E Sumner *Geography Teacher*

Maths News

KS3

A number of our key stage 3 students have thoroughly enjoyed a scavenger hunt challenge this term. Getting the opportunity to get out of the classroom and onto the school fields in order to try to find a range of mathematical concepts out in nature. These have included weights & measure, shape & number. Following on from this we will definitely be looking at more opportunities to get out and about as the weather improves.

KS4

With the summer exam series rapidly approaching, we will be putting on a number of additional sessions to help our Year 11 students prepare. Please see on the next page the current timetable of planned sessions but please do keep an eye on your inbox as we will e-mail through additional sessions as we assess the need. Please make sure the pastoral team have a current e-mail address for you.

There will be a session suitable for your son / daughter each week, so you should be encouraging them to attend each week and also to take advantage of the morning sessions – everyone has a topic or question they need help with!

Thursday 28 th February		Drop in session 8.10am Tuesday 26 th & Wednesday 27 th
Higher	3D Pythagoras, SOHCAHTOA	
Foundation 1	Pythagoras Theorem and Area of a Circle	
Foundation 2	Calculating Probability	
Drop In Session	Bring your own work you want help on	
Thursday 7 th March		Drop in session 8.10am Tuesday 5 th & Wednesday 6 th
Higher	Functions and Iteration	
Foundation 1	$Y=mx + c$ (working out and identifying gradient & y intercept)	
Foundation 2	Solving Linear Equations and inequalities	
Foundation 3	Averages from a frequency table	
Drop In Session	Bring your own work you want help on	
Thursday 21 st March		Drop in session 8.10am Tuesday 19 th & Wednesday 20 th
Higher	Sine rule, Cosine rule, Area of triangle	
Foundation 1	Simple & reverse percentage in context	
Foundation 2	Area & Perimeter - focus on a variety of shapes and mixed units	
Foundation 3	Key numeracy around fractions, percentage and decimals	
Drop In Session	Bring your own work you want help on	
Thursday 28 th March		Drop in session 8.10am Tuesday 26 th & Wednesday 27 th
Higher	Equation of parallel/perpendicular /tangents	
Foundation 1	Key numeracy around fractions, percentage and decimals	
Foundation 2	Factorise/Expand / simplify basic algebra	
Foundation 3	Angles in parallel lines/angles in triangles etc	
Drop In Session	Bring your own work you want help on	
Thursday 4 th April		Drop in session 8.10am Tuesday 2 nd & Wednesday 3 rd
Higher	Transformation of functions	
Foundation 1	Indices and Standard form	
Foundation 2	Sharing in a given ratio	
Foundation 3	Angles - interior & exterior angles of Polygons	
Drop In Session	Bring your own work you want help on	

We are often asked about what formulae students need to know so on the next page is a poster produced by the exam board that shows the formulae they need to know and will not be given in the exam.

Mr R Connell *Head of Maths*

Edexcel GCSE (9-1) Maths: need-to-know formulae

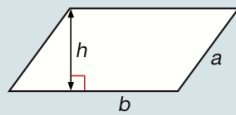
www.edexcel.com/gcsemathsformulae

Areas

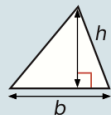
Rectangle = $l \times w$



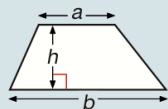
Parallelogram = $b \times h$



Triangle = $\frac{1}{2} b \times h$



Trapezium = $\frac{1}{2} (a + b)h$

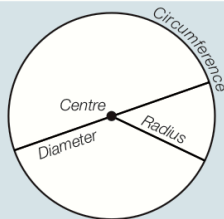


Circles

Circumference = $\pi \times \text{diameter}$, $C = \pi d$

Circumference = $2 \times \pi \times \text{radius}$, $C = 2\pi r$

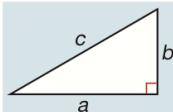
Area of a circle = $\pi \times \text{radius squared}$, $A = \pi r^2$



Pythagoras

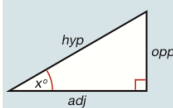
Pythagoras' Theorem

For a right-angled triangle,
 $a^2 + b^2 = c^2$



Trigonometric ratios (new to F)

$\sin x^\circ = \frac{\text{opp}}{\text{hyp}}$, $\cos x^\circ = \frac{\text{adj}}{\text{hyp}}$, $\tan x^\circ = \frac{\text{opp}}{\text{adj}}$



Quadratic equations

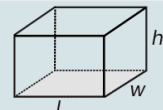
The Quadratic Equation

The solutions of $ax^2 + bx + c = 0$,

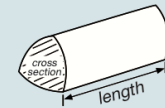
where $a \neq 0$, are given by $x = \frac{-b \pm \sqrt{(b^2 - 4ac)}}{2a}$

Volumes

Cuboid = $l \times w \times h$



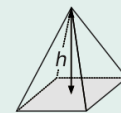
Prism = area of cross section \times length



Cylinder = $\pi r^2 h$



Volume of pyramid = $\frac{1}{3} \times \text{area of base} \times h$



Compound measures

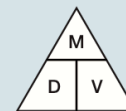
Speed

$\text{speed} = \frac{\text{distance}}{\text{time}}$



Density

$\text{density} = \frac{\text{mass}}{\text{volume}}$



Pressure

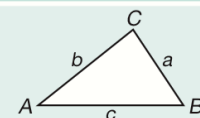
The formula for pressure does not need to be learnt, and will be given within the relevant examination questions.

Trigonometric formulae

Sine Rule $\frac{a}{\sin A} = \frac{b}{\sin B} = \frac{c}{\sin C}$

Cosine Rule $a^2 = b^2 + c^2 - 2bc \cos A$

Area of triangle = $\frac{1}{2} ab \sin C$



Foundation tier formulae

Higher tier formulae

Rowing Success

In February, the school had an excellent day at the Kent Schools Rowing Finals in Gillingham. We had 4 teams that had qualified from the qualifying round which was an achievement in itself.

However not content with that, the teams went up against the best in Kent, setting 4 season's bests, 4 new school records and 4 personal bests.

In the individual Year 9 Girls Rowing, a fantastic row by Grace got her on the podium to claim a Bronze medal.



The Year 9 Girls then followed this up with a new school record and season's best to improve on last year's bronze medal with a silver.

The Year 11 boys, supplemented by Joe and Jack from Year 10 as late replacements, surprised themselves with another mammoth effort to secure a bronze from the relay and set a new school record and season's best in the process.



The Year 10 Girls also got in on the act by coming third in the relay and also setting a new school record and season's best.

Mr S Ward. *PE Teacher*

Dear Parents/Carers,

Safer Internet Day 2019 was celebrated globally on Tuesday 5th February 2019 with the slogan "Together for a better internet". The day provides a fantastic opportunity to engage with children about their digital lives.

To help you talk to your children about having a positive and safe time online, UK safer internet website have created a pack for parents and carers, including conversation starters, a factsheet, family pledge card and more!

Our internet, our choice, so...

1. Choose to have a conversation

Talk regularly with your child about how they use technology, and find out what their digital life is like, including what their favourite sites and services are and also how being online makes them feel. Listening to your child will give you the best

possible idea of how you can support them. Not sure where to begin? Have a look at our [suggested conversation starters for parents](#).

2. Choose to take a balanced approach

As parents it's natural to feel worried about the risks posed by your child being online, but for young people the online world is exciting and fun, as it brings so many opportunities for them. Remember that your child will use technology and the internet differently given that they are growing up in a world immersed in all things digital. Try to look at both the positive and negative aspects of being online and empower your child with safe choices they can make instead of overwhelming them with restrictions.

3. Choose to make use of the tools available to you

There are lots of tools to help you manage the devices used by your family. For example, knowing how to activate and use parental controls can help protect your child from seeing inappropriate content online. For advice and guidance on how to make use of parental controls and other safety features on devices, check out our [free Parents' Guide to Technology and Internet Matters' step-by-step parental controls guides for online services](#).

4. Choose to get help and support

It can sometimes feel like young people are the experts in all things digital but remember – you are the life experts. You are always there to help your child but make sure you know how to get support too by visiting our [Need Help?](#) page. You can take steps to support your child online by using features such as privacy settings on social media and understanding how to make a report on a range of apps, games and services.

5. Choose to be current and topical

This Safer Internet Day focuses on the very relevant topic of consent in the digital world. Use this as an opportunity to support your child with how they tackle digital consent within relationships and friendships as well as how online services use the data we provide. Use [our quick activities as a family](#) this Safer Internet Day to help you unpick this topic together.

If you would like any more information, please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Kelham

Mrs O Kelham. *Senior Assistant Headteacher DSL*

Chaplain's Corner

Is it me or does time seem to fly past with ever increasing speed? 2019 already looks busy with exciting things ahead. If life is about our loving relationship with God and each other, a good question is how much of our precious time do we devote to what makes life precious? A wise priest once said to me 'imagine that life is like a jam jar into which we must fit all that the things of life, represented by pebbles of various sizes. The bigger pebbles represent those things that are most precious and important, then the smaller ones less so, and finally the sand - those things that you have to do but are not so precious or important. If you first put in the sand; the must do but low-importance things, and then work your way up to the biggest you find that they all may not fit in the jar! But if you do it the other way around, putting the most precious things such as God, then family and friends, then work and so on, then they do fit, for the little



things fit into the gaps.’ Try it; it works! So then, we must use our time wisely, not giving it all over to work and to social media and never forgetting what life is about.



We are taking 26 students to the Flame 2019 Youth Event at Wembley Arena on Saturday 2nd March 2019. Having been before we can confidently say it is simply brilliant! Open to senior students, this is the biggest Catholic event for young people in the UK, where 10,000 young people come together in a huge arena to be inspired by some of the most inspirational speakers and musicians around - steering right into many of the issues that challenge and concern young people today. It features Guvna B who is a brilliant Christian rapper and author, and Tim Hughes who is a famous Christian singer and songwriter, plus Cardinal Vincent Nichols who is head of the Catholic Church in England, and Robert Madu who is a fast-talking, funny and inspirational speaker who fills arenas all over America.

Three of our students have become representatives on the Executive Youth Board of the Diocese, expressing ideas, concerns and aspirations which then feed back into the schools. The quality of their feedback is fantastic. Not only does it give young people a real voice at an influential level and develops their own skills, but the ideas and thoughts will enhance the spirituality of the schools participating.



About 20 students from our school choir accompanied me to St. John’s Primary for an assembly with the juniors there and sang beautifully. This follows on from an Advent Assembly last term and we are already planning our next visit! I have to say how very impressed I was with the children at the Primary school and their questions, attentiveness and behaviour; a real pleasure.

Another exciting event coming up fast is our 6th Form Sleep-out and prayer vigil in St John’s Church car park and church to raise money for our local House of Mercy charity for the homeless. Last year’s event was so good; cardboard boxes and sleeping bags everywhere, and beautifully reverent prayer in the church; watch this space!



Finally, an appeal; Retreat letters for our summer retreats will be given out soon after we return from our February half term break. The logistics of getting all the forms and payments in are made so much easier when returned quickly rather than lurking in a student’s bag! These Retreats are spiritual time out to give our young people time to reflect on the meaning of life and where it might take them. Please support us.

A PRAYER OF ST TERESA OF AVILA

*Let nothing disturb you,
Let nothing frighten you,
All things are passing away:
God never changes.
Patience obtains all things
Whoever has God lacks nothing;
God alone suffices.*

AMEN

Stay blessed

Deacon Michael

Chaplain

Key Dates for Term 4

Wednesday 13th March – BTEC January Examination Results Day.

Tuesday 19th March - Year 10 Parents Evening (4.00pm to 6.30pm)

Wednesday 27th March - Year 7 Parents Evening (4.00pm to 6.30pm)

Wednesday 3rd April – Lake Garda Trip Information Evening.