

School Performance Tables – Results to be Proud of!!!

As you are all no doubt aware, a good school does far more than solely support students for external examination successes in Key Stages 4 & 5. Although academic achievement is clearly very important in terms of future life chances for our young people, at St John's we also strive hard to ensure that students develop morally and spiritually so that they are one day able to take their place as capable, confident and tolerant members of our society. As such, I am delighted to see that so many of our pupils are regularly taking part in such a wide variety of enriching extra-curricular opportunities, enabling them to develop an extensive range of skills in a number of different settings. This term's Newsletter does much to highlight some of the opportunities that take place on a daily basis outside of the classroom at our school.

Nonetheless, with the recent publication of this year's Schools' Performance Tables by the Department for Education, now is an appropriate time to reflect on just how successful St John's has been in supporting the academic progress of its pupils in recent times. In 2017, our KS4 Progress8 score (the government's most important measure of KS4 school performance) of +0.14 is a tremendous outcome and places us at the 30th percentile nationally for schools, as well as in the Top 10 of non-selective schools across the whole of Kent.

Perhaps even more impressively, our 'A level performance' progress score of +0.17 is the highest for any state school located in the borough of Gravesham and ranks in the **'Top 5' of all state schools (including Grammar Schools)** across the whole of Kent.

Source: <https://www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/schools-by-type?step=default&table=schools®ion=886&geographic=la&phase=16to18&for=16to18&datasetFilter=final>

These are truly wonderful returns and a real testament to both the hard work of pupils, as well as the excellent support and guidance provided by the dedicated staff of St John's. This year's Year 11 and Year 13 students have got a real challenge on their hands if they are to outperform last year's cohorts, although I am well aware that Mr Rowlinson (Head of Year 11) and Mrs Ainscow (Director of 6th Form) are determined to give it a real go!

Mr Barron *Head Teacher*



Students from years 7 to 12 have been working very hard since September to prepare for the School of Rock performance on 8th and 9th February. This is a lively, funny and upbeat performance, and all involved have worked incredibly hard on portraying their characters, as well as learning lines and dances. The Performing Arts department would like to thank all students for their commitment to after school and weekend rehearsals and wish them the best of luck for the shows.

Mrs R Steadman *Dance Teacher*



Battle of Britain Trip

A total of 14 students with a Polish background visited the Battle of Britain Memorial Museum, Capel-le-Ferne in late January. Mrs Perera and Mr Murphy took charge of the group, which focused on the contribution of pilots from Poland during the Battle of Britain. The foggy and murky conditions ensured France could not be seen, but it proved to be both an educational and enjoyable trip. It is our intention to conduct a follow-up study on the contributions of air force pilots from Poland and make a presentation of the student work in due course.

Mr C Murphy *Head of History*



Congratulations!

Former pupil Greg Tuke is one of only 6 candidates out of 300, to be accepted onto an 18-month course at the CAE Aviation Academy in Oxford. Greg was incredibly diligent throughout his time at our school and had planned for a career in aviation since primary school. After completing his A levels at St John's with top grades, Greg joined the easyJet Generation pilot training scheme where he successfully completed a variety of gruelling tests to gain his place at this prestigious academy.

Staff and students at St John's would like to wish Greg every success for the future!

COMING WORLD REMEMBER ME is a major innovative project based in the Belgian City of Ieper. Ypres, as it was known to a generation of servicemen in the Great War, was the scene of 3 major battles and countless other equally as devastating clashes between 1914 and 1918. Some 660,000 servicemen were killed in the Salient in those years with many remembered on the Menin Gate.

The CWRM project commemorates these servicemen through the creation of a clay model figure – one for each serviceman killed. Since 2014 the project has been open to visitors to the City who could participate through the creation of one of these figures. St John's students in that time have made in excess of 250 of these creations, the last batch being made on the occasion of the Year 7 Battlefield Tour that took place on December 15th.

At the recent whole school Assembly Mr. Barron, Head teacher, presented Mr Ward and Mrs Curley with their information booklet and dog tag commemorating the project and the clay figures that they had made.

St John's has been invited among six schools nationwide to be represented when these 660,000 figurines are put in situ in the Grand Ravine near Tyne Cot Cemetery. Five students from Year 8 have been selected to represent the school over two days – in late February – in the creation of the installation. The installation will form a major feature of the final year of the commemorations of the City of Ieper in 2018 and will no doubt be quite the attraction and a place to visit and pay respect to those who lost their lives the Great War.

Mr C Murphy *Head of History*





The 2nd 6th Form / Staff Charity Cycle ride is planned for June. The first such event raised in excess of £2,000 with the British Legion and Help for Heroes being the beneficiaries. There is already huge interest in the event this coming June as the first letters of information are being handed out. It is expected to have 12-14 staff with a similar number of 6th Formers taking part.

We shall be using the two school minibuses as support vehicles as well as two cars. Because of the logistics involved it is planned to complete the Kent leg of the cycle on June 16th with the cyclists leaving the Windmill Hill Memorial at 9am and cycling their way to Capel-le-Ferne, Folkestone. This is a distance of 55 miles. The following weekend, June 23rd, we shall cycle the Calais/Ieper [Belgium] route. This is a distance of 52 miles. June 24th will be spent on a Battlefield Tour [cycling of course!]. There will be a welcome in Ieper by the Mayor of the City, the Mayor of Gravesham and possibly the British Ambassador to Belgium.

Students and staff are requested to raise a minimum of £200, through various fund raising activities. This will cover the basic costs of transport, ferry and accommodation. We aim to raise over £3,000 this year and so the fund-raising starts. Our staff are supporting various aspects of the Charity Cycle; Mr Ward and Mr Walton are in charge of fitness, whilst Mr Mackenzie and Mr Watts are in charge of safety, the route and bicycle maintenance.

Anyone interested in being involved should contact Mr Murphy [who is in charge of the paperwork] as soon as possible. This will certainly be a memorable and satisfying experience for all those involved.

Mr C Murphy *Head of History*



Christmas Fayre

The annual Christmas Fayre organised by the Sixth Form WorkSkills group was held just before Christmas. 17 stalls were in the Heart Space and were open for business during both lunchtimes. Stalls included bric-a-brac, Christmas material, chocolate, drinks, Christmas Cards and the ever popular samosas. There was also a Teddy Bear and sweets raffles. Proceeds from the event will go to the Sixth Form Charity Cycle in June.

Mr C Murphy *Head of History*

Dancing On Ice

Many students took the opportunity on the recent Battlefield Christmas visit to Ieper to take to the ice and practise their ice skating skills; different results and outcomes depending on whether expert or novice or taking to the ice for the first time. The students thoroughly enjoyed the experience and definitely a break from their studies of the Battlefield.

Mr C Murphy *Head of History*

Literary Legends

How is Macbeth presented as a tormented character?

Savagely intense hallucinations dominate Macbeth's mind, portraying him as a persecuted, tormented and harassed character. 'Is this a dagger which I see before me'. This use of language depicts Macbeth's frail and decomposing mind because, historically, daggers were recognised as omens of misery and death. "Daggers" are quite small and ingenious instruments of death because they are easy to disguise, swift and effective to kill. Macbeth is seeing a dagger and this is ironic because he used a dagger to cunningly assassinate Duncan and now, karma has rebounded on him and he is envisioning a dagger which can kill him unexpectedly. Just like Duncan's demise was unexpected, unjust and cruel, Macbeth's termination will mirror his. Furthermore, Macbeth claims that 'A dagger of the mind, a false creation'. This highlights the fact that Macbeth is aware that he is spiralling into insanity because he blatantly states it. The metaphorical 'dagger' (symbolical for derangement) is butchering his mind apart, metaphorically ripping it to shreds, thus making him lose his stable hold on sanity. It is a 'false creation' which implies that he is hallucinating everything and he is the one who is causing all of the psychological pain and yet he can't actually stop it. Lastly, Macbeth is invited by a 'bell' which is later revealed to be a 'knell'. This is an example of the use of a semantic 'field of death' because a 'knell' is only rung at funerals and Macbeth is going to attend a funeral: his very own. The knell summons him to 'heaven or to hell'. Historically, kings and queens were viewed as being appointed to their positions by God. During the Jacobean and Elizabethan era, society was extremely religious and Kings and Queens were God's representatives on earth. When Macbeth committed regicide, he angered God and triggered his wrath. Macbeth is going to face his judgement and pay dearly for his repugnant sins.

This is a stark contrast to Act 1 because we see Macbeth being portrayed as the tormentor of villains. He was devoted to slaughtering opposing armies and winning victories. He was the plague of rascallions and he massacred any rivals of the kingdom which we see him performing in Act 1. His blade 'smok'd with bloody execution' as he killed his way through the masses of people 'like Valour's minion'. By using this language, Shakespeare has depicted Macbeth as the exterminator of opponents because the verb 'smok'd' implies that Macbeth evanesced his enemies and was like 'Valour's minion'. The noun 'valour' is attributed to Macbeth because he was very bold and courageous on the battlefield; he defied, mocked death and danger; conquered even the best warriors and seized victory. He was truly brutal and barbaric in his killings, he had no remorse and terrorised any rivals. This is ironic because, later on in the play, he ends up being tormented by the weight of guilt and sin. It's deteriorating his sagacity. Furthermore, in Scene 1, Macbeth is seen as a saviour, an almighty hero of the Scottish nation. He wanted to 'memorize another Golgotha'. This is metaphorical and symbolical. Golgotha was the place that Christ was crucified and crucifixion was reserved for people who were viewed as criminals. Crucifixion was the most brutal and excruciating execution method at the time. Macbeth crucified all of the corrupt enemies- slaughtering them in the most horrible way- and came out on top, looking like a heaven-sent hero. This is ironic because when he commits regicide, he is being tortured by his sin. He went from being the tormentor to being the tormented.

Dominika Elisova Year 11

New York Performing Arts trip 2018!

During the February half term 20 students will be embarking on our 2018 Performing Arts Trip to the performance capital of the world! Students will explore the streets of the Big Apple, visit Staten Island, go to the top of The Empire State Building and take part in a professional Broadway workshop and performance. The students will also be visiting Ellen Stardust's diner to see the performing waiters and waitresses reenact Broadway numbers whilst enjoying a delicious dessert! We wish all students and staff a safe and enjoyable trip and look forward to seeing and hearing all about it on their return.

Miss S Hardy Dance Teacher



The Year 8 students have spent the first half of the year investigating how to design and make a light sensor night light. The students have gained invaluable skills learning about CAD/CAM, designing the frame for their night light using 2D Design software to then manufacture the frame with our laser cutter. Students then researched components for their circuits and finally used prior soldering skills to solder each component into their own PCB.

In the picture are Sarah, Safoora, David, Teddy, Jacqueline and Charley with their wonderful nightlights.

In addition, the workshop has been busy with year 7s who have made a plant moisture sensor. Within this project the students have learnt about plastics and have gained some excellent skills in cutting, finishing and soldering. For most of the students, this is the first time they have used soldering equipment and all students completed their complex circuit safely and accurately. Well done year 7.

Miss E Kirby *Technology Teacher*

Year 7 Christmas Battlefield Tour



47 Year 7 students along with 5 staff, travelled to Ieper [Ypres] in Belgium for the annual Christmas Battlefield Tour. The Tour started with a talk by Mr Murphy at Essex Farm Cemetery. This cemetery had been a First Aid Post during World War 1; it was here that John Macrae wrote the poem IN FLANDERS FIELDS. From there it was on to Yorkshire Trench, a reconstructed World War 1 Trench and then to Passchendaele Museum with the extensive underground system and even more extensive trench system.

Students made their allocation of clay figurines for the CW display in February and then it was on to Spanbroekmolen Crater and Prowse Point in the vicinity of which the Christmas Truce 1914 happened. After some free time in Ieper it was attendance at the Last Post Ceremony at the Menin Gate and the return journey!

Mr C Murphy *Head of History*

England football success!



Congratulations to Maisie Symonds Year 10 upon her selection for the England Ladies Under 15 squad. Maisie will join the rest of the squad playing in Switzerland over the half term break.

This is a fantastic opportunity for Maisie as she represents her country both at home and abroad. We are also absolutely delighted and proud to hear this wonderful news and share it with all at St John's.

Congratulations Maisie!

Tuesday 6 February is Safer Internet Day; a day to celebrate and create a safer and better internet, where everyone is empowered to use technology responsibly, respectfully, critically and creatively.



Safer Internet Day (SID) is organised by the joint Insafe/INHOPE network, with the support of the European Commission, each February to promote the safe and positive use of digital technology, especially among children and young people. Celebrated on the second day of the second week of the second month, each year on Safer Internet Day, millions of people unite to inspire positive change and raise awareness of online safety issues and participate in events and activities right across the globe.

This year's theme of 'Create, Connect and Share Respect: A Better Internet Starts With You' encourages everyone to join the global movement, to participate and to make the most of the internet's positive potential to bring people together.

With a global, community-led approach, Safer Internet Day 2018 encourages everyone to join and play their part. There are many ways to do this:

- Children and young people can help to create a better internet by being kind and respectful to each other online, by protecting their online reputations (and those of others), and by seeking out positive opportunities to create, engage and share online.
- Parents and carers play a crucial role in empowering and supporting children to use technology responsibly, respectfully, critically and creatively, whether it is by ensuring an open dialogue with their children, educating them to use technology safely and positively, or by acting as digital role models.

Everyone has a responsibility to make a positive difference online; we can all promote the positive by being kind and respectful to others and seeking out positive opportunities to create and connect. We can all respond to the negative by reporting any inappropriate or illegal content. ·

- Find out more about the UK campaign for Safer Internet Day at: www.saferinternetday.org.uk

If you require any further information please contact Mrs Kelham (Designated Safeguarding Lead)

Inter-House Spelling Bee

Our half termly Inter-House competition was held on Friday, February 2nd and this term it took the form of a Spelling Bee. Each House had two representatives from each Year group with Mrs Giles (Head of English) providing the questions.

Various heats, knockouts and rounds took the 3 Houses down to the wire. Our thrilling final knock-out round saw nominated students [one from each house] take it in turns to spell increasingly difficult words in front of an enthralled (and partisan) Year 8 audience.

St Ambrose was the first to make a mistake, leaving St Patrick and St Clare representatives to fight it out. Elisha Adarkwah (St Patrick) and Mark Ivanov (St Clare), traded a series of perfect spellings in a highly pressurized situation, until finally Elisha got the better of Mark.

But all in vain, to an extent, as far as House Honours went; St Clare came 1st, St Patrick 2nd with St Ambrose 3rd. Who knew spellings could be so exciting!

Mr C Murphy *Head of History*



Rewards

The school relaunched its reward's system in September with a greater emphasis on celebrating student achievement and positive community contributions. This has been a wonderful success, with all year groups 'buying in' to the system. A massive total of 43,586 good comments has been awarded to date, with a total of 309 positive phone calls home and 525 postcards awarded in terms 1 and 2.

Students who reached the following good comment thresholds are presented with certificates in Year Group assemblies. Below are the number of recipients to date.

Good comments	Certificate	recipients
30	Bronze	722
50	Silver	354
100	Gold	17
150	Platinum	2
200	Governor	-

The top 10 good comment achievers in each year group for this academic year to date are:

Year 7		Year 8		Year 9		Year 10		Year 11		VI	
Jack	Browne	Abigail	Boyle	Emmanuel	Umar	Emma	Dowsett	Mopeninuoluwa	Sajowa	Holly	Errington
Jashneet	Singh	Johnstanley	Kefford	Leah	Freeman	Sabrina	Miscenko	Erin	Quinn	Sanjit	Bhandal
Owen	Biggs	Manvir	Akali-Rai	Emmanuel	Gbajobi	Isshaq	Javed	Dylan	Safo	Christopher	Poruchnyk
Robert	Farrell	Harry	Peach	Tyrone	Mazani	Anissa	Lynch	Tyler	Kurek	Samraj	Nota
Caitlin-May	Cox	Mark	Jones	Jacob	Goodchild	Parnpreet	Kaur	Ellie	Williams	Kristian	Bevan
Munesu	Kambanga	Oluwalayomi	Lanihun	Joseph	Souten	Leo	Quinlan	Mohammed	Miah	Kefa	Reid
Holly	Ludlow	Milly-Belle	Richards	Kim	Hull	Luke	Masters	Adam	Simmonds	Abbie	Freeman
Amelia	Seagrave	Grant	Hooker	Saroop	Toor	Simran	Ranu	Elisha	Adarkwah	Eden	Jackson-Knowles
Maximiljan	Sienkiewicz	Hannah	Pridmore	Stephen	Hamilton	Enrika	Banyte	Joshua	Both	Joel	Williams-Modeste
Ava	Attwood	Syle	D'Souza	Demi	Hutton	Kerr	Murphy	Rohan	Jagpal	Harry	Kanda

In January we held a special assembly to celebrate the successes of Terms 1 and 2. We have an end of year Rewards' Trip planned, and currently, there are a further 63 places available on this trip to students who achieve the highest good comments in the three Mission Statement categories of *Excellence for All*, *Service to Others* and *Inspired by Christ*.

The top tutor groups who earned most good comments were rewarded with a coffee and doughnut morning.

Term 1	Term 2
KS3 7KP	KS3 7MFC
KS4 11EWA	KS4 11EWA
KS5 13AB	KS5 12RA

The House that achieves the highest good comments is rewarded with an afternoon of free activities on the school field at the end of the year. There is always intense rivalry for this reward.

Standings at 4 January
St Patrick 10459
St Clare 9825
St Ambrose 9716

Chaplain's Corner

How many people reading this newsletter welcomed in the New Year as a homeless person? Well I know I didn't; I had warmth, family, love and Jesus.

More than 300,000 people in Britain – equivalent to one in every 200 – are officially recorded as homeless or living in inadequate homes, according to the charity Shelter. Alarming this figure includes an increasing number of young people. At any moment in time 35,000 young people are in homeless accommodation according to research.

At St. John's School, 'Inspired by Christ', our young people are trying to make a difference for the poor. Our young people donated 64kg (10 ½ stone) worth of contribution to the parish St. Vincent de Paul Food Bank during Advent; they really embraced the idea with great generosity.

Our sixth form students are holding a sleep-out to raise money for our local Catholic homeless charity the House of Mercy. This year we are going to have the sleep-out in the parish car park and garden, right next to the original House of Mercy building in Edwin Street, and will rota an all-night vigil before the Blessed Sacrament in the Church at the same time. Please look out for details at Mass in the coming weeks.

Sadly the poor are, in a sense, a mirror or a symbol of the wider spiritual poverty that afflicts humankind, that of poverty of heart, and homelessness a symbol of the restlessness of the soul until it finds its peace in God, who is love. In a way they bear our cross.

Stay blessed

Deacon Michael *Chaplain*

