

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to the Summer edition of our school newsletter.

Firstly, I want to take this opportunity to update you on my current health condition. After spending 6 weeks in Kings hospital in London, I have moved closer to home while I await a neuro-rehabilitation bed to help recover from my head injury. I will require further surgery in the (hopefully not too distant) future to replace my skull bone flap, and I am eager and determined to get well and return to school as soon as I possibly can. Whilst in hospital, I have been incredibly heartened and bolstered by the sheer volume of “get well” wishes that I have received from the school community - they have given me a much-needed lift on my road to recovery. Thank you for keeping me in your thoughts and prayers and I ask that you please continue to pray for my full recovery.

I have greatly missed being in school this term. Thankfully, I have been kept fully up to date with all school news and have heard pleasing reports about the many wonderful events which have taken place to celebrate the achievements and talents of the students: our year 8 graduation, our rewards evening, our ‘Night at the musicals’ at Woodville halls, our Gymnastics showcase ‘Tenacity’, our Big Dance, our Sports Day and our triumph at the KCSP Sports day, to name but a few. I particularly missed our new year 6 open evening and transition days as it always brings me great joy to welcome the new cohort to our St John’s family. However, I have realised that it is the day-to-day joy that I get seeing our students engrossed in their learning and in their work, and the daily interactions that I have with them, which I miss the most.

A huge thank you to the staff and to my senior team for all their hard work- and especially to Mr Walton, who has led the school in my absence and is ensuring that it continues to go from strength to strength.

I wish you and your loved ones a very blessed and restful Summer break. I plan to fill my days with physio and exercise so that I can return to school as soon as I possibly can in the new academic year.

God bless and best wishes.

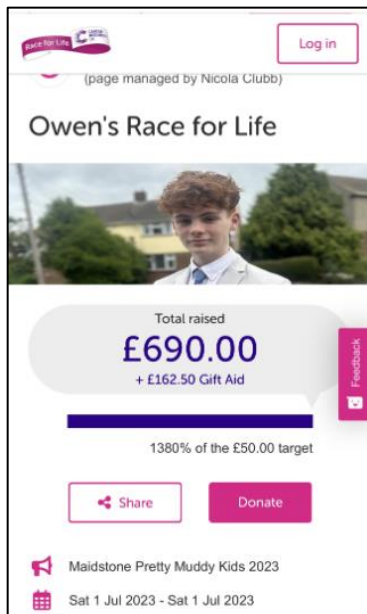
Matt Barron  
Headteacher



**2023 Champions**

**Kent Catholic Schools' Partnership Sports Day**





## Race for Life

Many congratulations to Year 7 student Owen S who took part in the cancer research race for life.

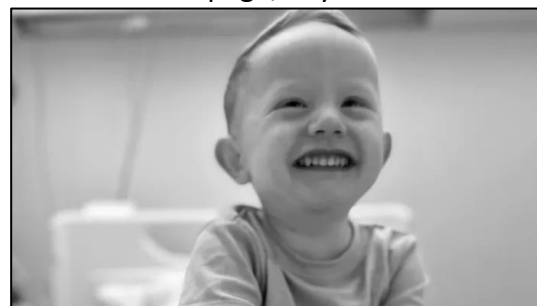
Owen ran in memory of his grandad who sadly passed away with lung cancer. So far, he has raised a staggering £690 and an extra £162 in gift aid for the charity. We are delighted with Owen's achievement and the determination that he has shown in raising such a considerable amount of money for Cancer Research. Well done Owen.



## Koda's Walk

The St John's community are supporting Koda's Walk, a fundraising event for the Prosthetics department in Maritime Hospital. The sponsored walk is being arranged by Koda's aunty who is an ex-student of St John's. A Go Fund me page has been set up and can be accessed via: [https://www.gofundme.com/f/kodas-walk?member=27838481&sharetype=teams&utm\\_campaign=p\\_na+share-sheet&utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_source=whatsapp](https://www.gofundme.com/f/kodas-walk?member=27838481&sharetype=teams&utm_campaign=p_na+share-sheet&utm_medium=social&utm_source=whatsapp)

If you would like to read Koda's story and make a donation please visit the Go Fund me page; any donation will be greatly received.





## Gymnastics

### Floor and Vault National Finals – May 2023

On Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> May, St. John's gymnastics squad competed in the National Finals of the BSGA Team Floor and Vault competition, held in Stoke-on-Trent. They were representing both St. John's and the South East region. As always, the standard of gymnastics in this National event was extremely high; St. John's performed exceptionally well, and both teams achieved 8<sup>th</sup> place in their respective categories. Congratulations to all involved!

Under 14 Mixed: Shaydon, Fabio, Temi, Nadia, Eva  
Under 19 Mixed: Erikas, David, Dolcie, Amelia, Diana



### Tenacity – June 2023

On Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> June, St. John's Gymnastics Squad hosted "Tenacity" – an evening performance of gymnastics skills to showcase the wonderful gymnastic talent we have at St. John's. Members of St. John's Primary school also took part, providing them with an opportunity to work alongside our students here at the secondary school. The showcase enables the gymnastics squad to work outside the competition environment, and have some fun, whilst also raising some funds for the competitions that take place in the next academic year. Well done to everyone involved – it was a fantastic event.



*Mrs L Weller. Assistant Headteacher (Teaching and Learning)*

## Performing Arts

### The Big Dance

On 20<sup>th</sup> May, all students in years 7 and 8 took part in a project they have been working towards for the last two months called 'The Big Dance'. This is a performance undertaken in memory of a beloved staff member, Natalie O'Shea, who tragically passed away almost 9 years ago after she contracted Meningitis. The students performed with great professionalism and dedication whilst successfully raising money for the Meningitis Research Foundation.

### Woodville 'A Night at the Musicals'

Students from years 7 – 13 performed a wide range of acts from a variety of musicals. The acts included drama, music and dance and the students performed with enthusiasm and to an exceptional standard. The show was a great success with many of our students performing for the first time! Congratulations to all involved.

*Mrs R Steadman. Teaching and Learning Leader.*

## Visual Arts

### GENFEST 2023

St John's students dominated the visual arts at this year's GENFest 2023 hosted by Gulbenkian Theatre (University of Kent) in Canterbury. GENFest is a free festival where the work of 13-25 year olds is celebrated and in turn provides a platform to young creative voices in Kent. The programme showcases up-and-coming local creatives and usually features a mix of live theatre, dance, music, art exhibition and short film screening plus stand-up comedy.

A collaborative mixed media painting by year 8 students on WW1, inspired by artist Paul Nash with a graphic infusion of the 'In Flanders Fields' poem by John McCrae was on show alongside a range of alternative photography and animation work produced by our A level photographers. The show was warmly received by the general public. Thanks to Pablo B and Rhodric R for curating and helping with the mounting assisted by professional gallery staff. A great opportunity for our students to showcase the art and photography department.

*Mrs A Stone. Head of Art and Design.*



## Lit in Colour

The English Department are proud to announce that we have been accepted as part of the Lit in Colour Pioneers Programme for 2023. In partnership with Penguin Publishers, we have been sent a diverse range of texts that the department will be using in reading groups and Pioneers schemes from September. If any student would like to be a part of this programme, please drop by the English office and register your interest.



*Mrs C Bishop. Co-Subject Leader, English.*

## Imperial War Museum

On Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> May, the Year 8 Transition group visited the Imperial War Museum in London. They were accompanied by Mrs Ong, Mr Coode and Mrs Slamkova. The trip was undertaken to consolidate the students' learning of the First and Second World Wars from their History lessons. The group had also been involved in the planning of the trip in their Life Skills lessons. The party travelled by train from Gravesend to Waterloo and then made their way on foot to the museum. At the museum, the students completed 2 First World War Gallery Trail worksheets as well as visiting the Second World War Gallery and spending time (and their money!) in the gift shop. The group were impeccably behaved and everyone had an enjoyable though tiring day!



*Mrs A Ong. Transition Teacher.*

## St John's teachers help clear overgrown garden at St Katherine's Church, Shorne in June 2023.

Two of our teachers, Mr Juma and Mr Parker, recently volunteered their time to help serve the local parish. Last month they went to St. Katherine's Church, a historic landmark in the neighbouring village of Shorne, to tame the overgrown garden area. The garden is a popular spot for local residents, but it had become heavily overgrown.



Mr Juma and Mr Parker, alongside some of the Knights of St Columba, spent several hours clearing away weeds, trimming bushes, and mowing the grass.

It was a lot of hard work, but it was also very rewarding. The garden is looking much better now, and it will be a great place for members of the community to relax and enjoy the outdoors.



St Katherine's Church was built in the 12th century and is one of the oldest buildings in Shorne. It is a Grade 1 listed building, which means it is of special architectural and historical interest. The church is still used for regular worship led by Father Moses Amune MSP at 11am every 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of the month.



4. Volunteers From left - right

Mr Parker, Mr Afeeva (St. John's Parishioner), Mr Juma, Ms Arthur-Banks (St. John's Parishioner), Fr Moses Amune (St. John's Parish Priest)

Fr Moses was very grateful for the efforts of both Mr Parker and Mr Juma, alongside the Knights of St. Columba. The work made a real difference to the garden. Following on from this garden clearing, Mr Parker and Mr Juma organised for a number of our sixth form students to visit St. Katherine's Church for an afternoon of reflection and prayer. This is the very first time this trip has been organised, and it was very well received by the sixth form students who enjoyed the peaceful garden and tour of this remarkable church. The students also had an opportunity to have a picnic lunch and play a game of cricket in the garden. Furthermore, they helped create a virtual tour of St. Katherine's church, which we plan to upload onto St. John's Parish website.

The teachers' volunteer work is just one example of the many ways that St John's Catholic Comprehensive students and staff are working to make a difference in the community. The school is committed to providing opportunities for students to develop their leadership skills and to give back to the community as part of one of our school mission statements '**Service to Others**'.

*Mr F Juma. Religious Studies Teacher.*

## GOODBYE YEAR 11!

After a tough and challenging academic year, Year 11 threw themselves enthusiastically into celebrations to mark the end of their examination period before they officially departed for a well-earned break. It is always bittersweet saying farewell to our leavers after all the hard work that Year 11 entails. Needless to say, we are immensely proud of them for their conscientious efforts and dedication throughout this year.

Our leavers were sent off in true St John's style; students were invited to a celebratory Mass and Leavers' BBQ on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> June, and of course the highlight was the End of Year Rewards Celebration held two days later at the Mercure Brands Hatch Hotel and Spa.

Mass is an important occasion for students to give thanks and reflect together on their personal journey through St John's and we are very grateful to Fr Moses Amune MSP and Mrs Gibbons who led this celebration for us. The Leavers' assembly was an emotional one but it also gave the opportunity for staff to show their appreciation to Year 11 for their commitment to their studies by 'letting their hair down' in the well-received Leavers' Mass staff video. Students were then invited to participate in the ritual 'shirt signing' before heading outside for a BBQ with staff in the sunshine; it was a glorious afternoon and one which was enjoyed by all!

End of Year Rewards Celebration.....Year 11 students looked amazing in their new attire, and the staff didn't look too bad either! It was a lovely occasion to mark the students' time at St. John's with a hot finger food buffet followed by throwing some shapes on the dancefloor. We would like to thank our students for a wonderful evening and their exemplary behaviour.



We would also like to take this opportunity to thank all of our Year 11 students for their hard work and determination this year; we very much hope that this is reflected when their results are released in the Summer and we look forward to sharing their successes with them to recognise all that they have worked so hard to achieve.

We wish them the best of luck in their future pathways and look forward to welcoming very many of them back to the Sixth Form next year.

Finally, always remember as you move into the 'big wide world' that you will always be part of a much bigger community - the St John's community.

*The Year 11 Team.*

## Draughts 2023

Congratulations to our Year 7 and 8 Draughts 2023 Champions; the Class Champions, Year Winners and Key Stage Winner are all detailed in the graphic below. Well done to all of the students that participated in the tournament and a very special well done to each of our champions.

Draughts 2023 Class Champions	
	
<b>Year 7</b> <b>Aydaan B</b> — Year 7 Champion	<b>Year 8</b> <b>Denas A</b> — Year 8 Champion and Key Stage Winner
Conor H Oskar B Poppie R Lillian F Owen S	Sahib A Mehdi H Karol L Vinnie W Harry E

## Careers

### Canterbury Christ Church University's Inspiring Minds Programme

Inspiring Minds is a pioneering programme provided by Canterbury Christ Church University. The programme is designed to encourage and support local students to study STEM subjects. A number of year 10 students went to six Saturday morning sessions at the University and engaged in projects where they found solutions for 'real world problems' such as environmental issues. This culminated in a showcase event where our Year 10's could display their various projects to staff and parents. All students earned their Bronze Crest award for their participation. Our students were absolutely fantastic and produced some well thought out solutions and their presentations were very professional. The school is very proud of these students and their achievements; well done to each of them!



## Work Experience 26<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> June

In the last week of June our Year 10 & 12 students had the opportunity to access either in-person or virtual work experience. We have received wonderful feedback regarding the conduct and achievements of our students undertaking work experience and St John's Catholic Comprehensive School are very grateful to the following companies and schools for their continued support of our students.

*Alvir Airways, St Botolph's primary school, Bronte School, Tesco, Nuclear Waste Services, Manta Trust, St James Place Wealth Management, Lloyds Pharmacy, Delightful Gems, Leybourne Grange Riding Centre for the disabled, ABT design Ltd, Eastbury Primary School, Gremoor Homes, MTS Service, Dacher Ltd, D Durso Plastering, Balgore Estate Agency, G&M Motors, Balfour Beatty, ADB Fire Protection, Ergonom Ltd, Shears Green Junior & Infant School, CosTech dental Lab, NHS, Barclays, RS Dawe, Kings Farm Primary School, Sparkling Beauty, St John's Catholic Primary School, O'Halloran & O'Brien, Gravesham Borough Council, Kevin Davis, Gravesend Ecological Steam Cleaners, Vegan Antics, Tag Construction Ltd, M B Motorbike Logistics Ltd, Southern Sales & Services Ltd, Cult Hair Salon, Gravesend Job Centre, Ambassador Cruise Line, Moat Homes Ltd, Accident Solutions Dartford, Helicon Mountain Ltd, ASDA, Dog World Ltd, R&C Capital, John Lacken, VidaFresh, A Hunt & Co (city) Ltd, Brandshatch Place Hotel & Spa, Phillip Hartley Electrical, Chantry Community Academy, Wrotham Road Primary School, St Nicholas Playgroup, Bright Beginnings Nursery, Colliers, Durty Media Ltd, Automotive Sales, Legal & General Investment Management, Safia's Beauty Bar, Co op, JJ Builders & contractors, Golden Motors Services Ltd, St John the Evangelist Church, Millbrook Garden Centre, Townly Grammar School, Echo Fish Bar, St Stephen's Catholic Primary, The Heart of Gaming, DGP Logistics Plc, Northfleet Nursery, BAE Systems, Sultan Sofrasi Restaurant, Abbey Wood Nursery School, St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Doubletree by Hilton, MJA Equine, Gravesham Community Leisure Ltd, Hempstead Therapy Centre, FIVE Interiors, Munchies Peri Peri, Barron Edwards Sterling, St Aidan's Nursery, Next Plc, CycloPark, G+J Engineering & Erection Services Ltd, Eliok, BMJ, Apexonebusiness Services, Armor of God Apostolic Church, English Martyrs Roman Catholic Primary School, Lenique Louis, Abbey Wood Nursery School, Toni Tots, L&Q, Best2Care, Bill Shephard, St Stephen's Catholic Primary School, Lloyd's Bank, Penton & Sons Ltd., Rowhill Grange Hotel & Spa, Spiral Packs, A Hunt & Co, Travel Vogue Ltd, CWT Meetings and Events, The Entertainer, The Leather Bottle, F ASF Ltd, Boots, Code Red Hair, Cecil Road Primary, Jeevan Transport, BrainLabs, Joia Ltd, DYNEEMA LTD, Sharp & Owen Hair Salon, Building and Landscape Design by Keith Poynton, Tonbridge and Malling Leisure Trust, Headline Hair Salon and Reed Recruitment.*

## Logicor Visit 27<sup>th</sup> June 2023



A group of year 7 students took part in a core skills development workshop kindly hosted by the Talent Foundry and Logicor. The workshop developed the students' core, transferable skills including teamwork, speaking and listening. Students learnt about the flow of products and services across supply chains, and created their own sustainable park.

## Construction Youth Trust Mentoring Group

The Construction Youth Trust have been running a mentoring programme for a group of our Year 10 students. The students involved have had several wonderful experiences including bricklaying, bridge building, an electrical workshop and a CV masterclass.



The Year 10 students also enjoyed a day out at The Gallagher Group quarry in Maidstone where they were able to use construction simulators, drive round the quarry and eat hotdogs and ice cream. They also built their own Bug Hotel which has been put in the woods around the quarry to encourage wild life in the area.



*Mrs H Rooke. Careers Co-ordinator.*


## Pre-Loved Uniform Shop

Our Pre-Loved uniform shop has been a great success; we opened the shop during our New Year 7 parents evening and it was almost a sell out on the night. We are delighted that we have been able to offer this support to families and we will continue to open the Pre-Loved shop on a termly basis. The success of the shop relies on the continuous generosity of our school community and we continue to welcome any donations of uniform so that we can restock the shop. If you have any spare or out-grown uniform you are able to donate, please bring it to the school's reception in September.

## Safeguarding

The end of an academic year brings a range of emotions. It is a time for reflection and celebrating achievements, as well as excitement with the summer holidays on the horizon. However, it is also a time of change and upheaval which can feel difficult and cause anxious feelings. For some students it is the end of their time at school or college altogether, and others may be adjusting to the end of term, exams or assessments.

Everyone in school or college will also be preparing for the shift from a regular routine to no formal education structure across the summer break.



Anna Freud have collected resources to help older students deal with change and prepare for the summer break. They have also included resources for those students who will be leaving school, to help them feel more able to handle the changes coming their way.

**Resources for students: dealing with change:**

- Six tips to help you handle post-exam blues – BBC Bitesize - The end of exam season is often a relief but it's a big change too. This guidance will help students adjust and recover after exam season.

<https://mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/resources/tips-to-help-young-people-with-post-exam-blues/>

- The summer holidays offer an opportunity to recharge, but some young people may find themselves struggling without the structure and support network of school. Young people at secondary school can create a detailed self-care plan for the summer with this resource.

<https://mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/resources/my-self-care-plan-secondary/>

**Resources for students: starting or leaving school/college:**

- Starting college or university: advice for autistic young people – National Autistic Society. A webpage offering guidance and support to autistic children and young people, or their families, who are in the position of transitioning to college or university.

<https://mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/resources/starting-college-or-university-advice-for-autistic-young-people/>

- Know before you go: guide to navigating university life – Student Minds Knowing what to expect can make a big difference to anxiety around changes. This detailed guide for young people shares lots of information about what to expect from university life.

<https://mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/resources/know-before-you-go-guide-to-navigating-university-life/>

- Moving Up! The transition to secondary school – Anna Freud An animation and teacher toolkit for those who have recently started Year 7, helping them feel more confident as they join your school.

<https://mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/resources/moving-up-the-transition-to-secondary-school/>

There has been a newsletter created for young people to support them in keeping well over the summer. Please find the link below:

<https://sway.office.com/Uv2MtvXQH6ozrL6i?ref=email>



No  
swimming

## St Clements Lakes, Greenhithe



No entry

- Be aware going in this lake is very **DANGEROUS!**
- The rocks are not safe to jump off and could cause **INJURY**
- There are chemicals that could **POISON** and cause **HARM** to your skin
- There is wildlife and fish that live in this lake that need to be **PROTECTED**
- This will cause a nuisance to the residents that live around the lake please be **RESPECTFUL!**
- **POLICE** do regular patrols there and you will be **ACCOUNTABLE** for your actions



## Exam Results Day 2023

### Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> August 2023: Year 13 and Year 12

When collecting results, please enter the school via the main doors and proceed to the HEART SPACE. Please do not wander around the school.

9:00am to 12:00pm: Year 13 A Levels and Level 3 BTEC/Vocational qualifications

10:30am to 12:00pm: Year 12 A/AS Levels and Level 3 BTEC/Vocational qualifications

### Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> August 2023: Year 11 and Year 10

When collecting results, please proceed to the SPORTS HALL via the following route. Walk past the front doors of the school, onto the service yard road, and enter the Sports Hall via the rear door by the PE Office. Please do not wander around the school.

9:00am to 11:00am = Year 11 GCSEs and Level 2 BTEC/Vocational

10:30am to 12:00pm = Year 10 GCSEs and Level 2 BTEC/Vocational

9:00am – 1.00pm = **Sixth Form Enrolment**

## Chaplain's Corner

I am sure many of you are busy making plans for the summer. Many of us are looking forward to spending time with family and friends. I have enjoyed hearing the excitement of pupils who are travelling to visit family who live in other parts of the country and world. Their plans made me recall my own childhood.

Every summer, my family would make the trip to Ireland to reconnect with our family. Calling this trip a 'holiday' would be in breach of The Trade Description Act.

The pre-holiday shopping would start around Easter in earnest. For those of you familiar with the Irish weather system, you will know you have to pack for all weathers. Raincoats, wellington boots and outfits for the various Masses we would attend. Then presents for everyone we would visit.



Towards the end of June, my dad's attention would turn towards the car. This was back in the eighties, so travel was not as accessible and easy as adventures today. Our family car would have to make the journey (pre M25), around the South Circular, leading to the M4, then crossing the Severn Bridge into Wales toward Fishguard. The road journey from Britain's shores ended with a four and half hour ferry crossing.

Dad would spend weeks making sure the car was given a suitable health check. Oil and water carefully monitored. New tyres purchased. The route would be researched and planned. Allowing for every eventuality, diversionary routes considered.

Then I would guarantee, either my brother or myself would have some form of accident in the days before departure. Last minute preparations abandoned for a long wait in the casualty department of Gravesend Hospital. These accidents usually resulted in stitches, casts on limbs, and in one particular year, a neck brace for me. Mum was forced to hold my neck still as we travelled the winding roads of Wales.

Once we arrived at our destination we braced ourselves for two weeks of more travelling and visiting. There was rarely time to enjoy time as a family.

Holiday? I think a military operation would better describe the trip.

I wonder how many of us approach life this way.

Is life so busy and hectic, that we hardly take time to stop, breathe and consider the world around us, our families, and our friends? If we squeeze all the above into the little time we allow ourselves, what time is there for God?

To use a motoring metaphor, everyone needs to leave the motorway and use the hard shoulder from time to time.

This is my challenge and wish for you this summer. Do not busy yourself with doing, but concentrate on being. Waste time with loved ones. Our too busy lives leave us over-stimulated, sometimes anxious and often on edge. We are always available, our phones always switched on, plugged into everyone and everything. Waste time exploring the world God created.

Waste time with God, get to know Him. Wasting time with God gives us time to reflect. Allow the peace of God to enter our hearts and minds. It is healing, it releases creativity, peace, joy and hope. There are gifts within each of us waiting to be ignited by God's love. That's how friendships grow, in the time we waste in each other's company.

I pray you all enjoy a restful, rewarding summer. Sharing in the joy and love of those dear to you. Be creative, be silent, and take time to breathe. Waste time with God.

May God's Grace, Love and Blessings shine upon you and your families this summer.

Susanne Gibbons , Chaplain.

Take time to claim your strength; they are gifts of God.  
Take time to have fun; it's God's way of teaching you your strengths.  
Take time to grow yourself; only you can grow you.  
Take time to trust yourself; God trusts you.  
Take time to be self-reliant; it is better than being dependent.  
Take time to share with others; they will bless you, and you will bless them.  
Take time to have hope, you are a child of God.



God Bless you all.