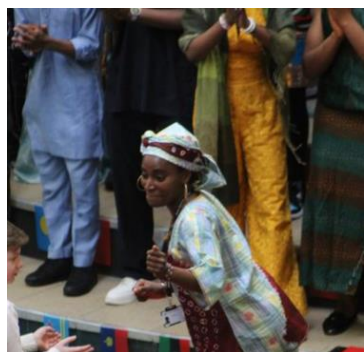


Welcome one and all to our Easter Edition of the St John's Newsletter – an opportunity to reflect on some of the fantastic work and enriching activities that have taken place at our school over Terms 3 & 4. As always, these last three months have been extremely busy ones, with our KS4 & KS5 students preparing diligently for their summer examinations, the majority of our Parents' Evenings taking place, our KS4 Options Evening, Year 8 Retreats, as well as a whole host of sporting and other suitably enriching events (to give you just a small taste of the activities that have been occurring at our school).

However, just as we were all running out of energy and our minds started drifting towards the Easter Holidays, the most amazing thing happened at our school: our inaugural Cultural Day. In my 28 years of working at the St John's, I have to say that this has been my most cherished moment so far. To see the way in which our school community came together in absolute joy and mutual respect – celebrating the amazing diversity we have at the school (48 different countries of the world being represented) – was an experience that I will treasure for the rest of my life.

As you can see from the image on the right, the school was a sea of colour and the students really did get into the spirit of the day. Our whole school assembly celebration was

organised and led by the students, and included wonderful musical and dance performances. However, the undeniable highlight was the fashion catwalk, where students (and staff!) displayed their beautiful national costumes, not to mention their impressive dance moves, to the rest of the school community. It was a picture of absolute happiness and sheer joy: to see the students so proud of their own heritage and the rest of the school community so supportive of each other, was a vision of inclusivity, and spoke volumes about everything that is truly special about our school. The school also managed to raise over £1700 for Cafod's Syria & Turkey earthquake appeal and a UK Equality Charity on the day, which was also fantastic. A huge congratulations and 'thank you' to everyone who played their part.



*Ms Monlade getting into the spirit of the day on the red carpet*



*The whole school community is captivated by Indian Dancing on our Cultural Day – Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> March*

However, it didn't end there, as later on that evening, 21 of our 6<sup>th</sup> form students and 5 of our staff, took it upon themselves to undertake a homeless sleep out under our Art Loft in aid of the local House of Mercy, which supports local homeless people. In spite of the dreadful weather and loud snoring (mentioning no names!), they lasted the night and raised over £1400 – embodying the school's values of 'Inspired by Christ' and 'Service to Others' in the process. A very well done to you all. Please note that it is not too late to donate via the following link; [Homeless Sleepout 2023 - St John's Catholic Comprehensive School \(stjohnscs.com\)](https://stjohnscs.com)

Enjoy the rest of the Newsletter, and let me take this opportunity to wish you and your loved ones a very Happy and Holy Easter. God bless,

Matt Barron - Headteacher

## Geography and Spanish Trip to Tenerife

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> February Miss Cole, Miss Pizza, Mr Rowlinson and Mr Sumner took a group of 33 Year 10 & 11 students to Tenerife for a Geography and Spanish trip. On the first day we arrived at Puerto de la Cruz and had a tour of the area, looking at the volcanic sand beaches. The second day we went to the volcano, it was freezing because we were so high up! We were supposed to get the cable car to the top but due to ice and snow we couldn't actually reach the summit. However, it was still amazing to see the volcano up close! On the third day, we put our helmets on to descend into volcanic lava caves, and looked at the formations that the lava had made underground. After this we went on a boat trip where we were fortunate enough to see some dolphins and whales. The back of the boat was reserved for those who didn't quite find their sea legs! The last day we spent looking around a renewable energy plant and it was so interesting to see how they used robots around the area to help them become more sustainable. We then got to soak up the last of the Tenerife sun by having some free time along the beach, where we managed to have a last ice cream before heading back to rainy England. If you ever get the chance, you should take the opportunity to go on this trip - it was so enriching and good to see geography come to life on this sunny Spanish island.



Chantelle T and Jeena B (Year 11).

## Performing Arts

### GCSE Dance Choreography workshop

GCSE Dance students who are in their second year of the course, took part in a choreography workshop led by an external dance practitioner on 2<sup>nd</sup> March. The students were incredibly professional and spoke eloquently about their ideas, as well as demonstrating how well they could work independently on solo projects throughout the 3-hour session. We have no doubts that the hard work they put into this workshop will be reflected in their final practical grades in the summer.

## GCSE and Foundation Dance Performance workshop

Our GCSE students who are in the first year of their course, along with some of our Foundation Dance students, took part in a performance workshop led by an external Dance practitioner on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> March. Mel Simpson has a wealth of experience working with students to help them to reach their full potential in the practical element of the course, and it was wonderful to see the outstanding performances that were created throughout the day. The students were amazing as always!

## Woodville Performing Arts Showcase

On 23<sup>rd</sup> of March, our Performing Arts Music and Dance students performed a professional showcase at the Woodville in Gravesend. Students from Years 7 through to Year 13 were able to display their wonderful talents from street dance to contemporary dance, a variety of music genres as well as their own choreography. They were professional throughout the showcase and their many hours of rehearsals really shone through in their performances. Well done to all who took part!

Mrs R. Steadman. *Teaching and Learning Leader.*

## Harry Potter and The Cursed Child.

On Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> of March, a number of Drama Students departed from Platform 9  $\frac{3}{4}$ 's at Gravesend and headed for a day of Magic in London.

Once in London, students headed to Shaftsbury Avenue for a day of enchantment at Harry Potter and The Cursed Child. Students escaped the rain and snow and were immersed into the Wizarding World of J.K Rowling and her magical story of Scorpius and Albus. A tale of devoted friendship and writing wrongs of the past. Students were amazed to see the incredible effects and acting displayed in front of their eyes, from wizard eating bookcases, to the great lake and soul-eating dementors. Students marvelled at seeing their favourite characters take shape in front of them.

The students on the day represented the school fantastically well as always - demonstrating respect, admiration and appreciation for the opportunity they had received.

Mischief Managed,

Miss C. Comiskey. *Drama Teacher.*







## Gymnastics National Finals

St John's gymnastics squad travelled to Stoke-on-Trent in March to compete in the National Finals of the Team Trio Gymnastics competition. They competed within 3 categories against teams from the rest of the United Kingdom.

Under 13 Mixed – 11<sup>th</sup> place – David, Nadia, Eva, Mya

Under 16 Mixed – 6<sup>th</sup> place – Erikas, Dolcie, Molly

Under 19 Mixed – 6<sup>th</sup> place – Fabio, Amelia, Diana

Well done to all teams – a great achievement. Good luck for the Floor and Vault National Finals taking place in May.

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

## John Downton Arts Awards

We are absolutely delighted that a record number of our students were shortlisted for the John Downton Awards 2022. The exhibition commemorates the life and work of John Downton, the celebrated Kent artist, poet and philosopher, and this year, eleven of our pupils were shortlisted for this prestigious award.

It was wonderful to see Megan L receive the overall Mixed Media 17-18 Award & Precious N won the 'Highly Commended' 11-16 Award.



The work was exhibited at County Hall, Maidstone, alongside other schools across the whole of Kent. This is a prestigious annual exhibition which encourages and celebrates the creativity of Kent's young artists. The winning entries will also be exhibited at the Turner Contemporary, Margate later in the year.

Mrs A. Stone. Head of Art.





## CAREERS

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

We have started the first of our 6 Saturday mornings on the Inspiring Minds project, which is a pioneering programme provided by Canterbury Christ Church University. The programme has been designed to encourage and support local students to study STEM subjects. The Year 10 students involved will attend 6 Saturday morning sessions at the University and engage in projects where they are aiming to find solutions for 'real world problems' such as remote learning.

### **Kent University - Future Human Campus Visit**

The Future Human Campus Visit gave some of our Year 10s the opportunity to experience university-style learning, including a lecture, some independent work and a seminar. Students had a tour of the campus and were able to interact with staff, student ambassadors, and postgraduate students. It helped our students understand the role of research at a university and the impact of this on the way university students learn. Students worked on their problem-solving and communication skills by taking part in their own 'future human' themed mini research project. Students explored two areas of the 'future human' topic from different subject viewpoints, for example 'Can humans live forever by changing our genes?' or 'Can humans live forever or would this change work and society?'.

### **Taster sessions at North Kent College Dartford and Gravesend Campuses.**

A number of students from Year 10 were able to take part in taster sessions in the following subjects: Carpentry & Joinery, Bricklaying, Painting & Decorating, Plumbing, Engineering, Electrical, Refrigeration and Air Conditioning, Catering & Hospitality at the Gravesend Campus. Year 10 students who were interested in Sport, Personal Training, Public Services, Computing & Gaming, Business, Travel & Tourism, Administration and Accounting were able to visit the Dartford campus on a separate day where they were also taken on a campus tour.

### **Construction Youth Trust**

St John's were fortunate enough in National Apprenticeship week to have Construction Youth Trust visit and hold an assembly on apprenticeships for Year 7, 8 and 9 students. The pupils were able to interact with our guest presenters and ask questions about the world of apprenticeships.

### **Dragons Den**

An ex-student of St John's, Kaleji, who now works for Pricewaterhousecoopers (PWC) as a senior associate of technology consulting, came for an outreach activity session to introduce Year 12 students to the company and the diverse roles available within PWC. Students took part in a 'Dragons Den' type activity and presented to PWC.

Mrs H. Rooke. *Careers Co-Ordinator.*

## Psychology of Serial Killers

A group of Year 12 Psychology and Criminology students attended an enriching theatre production on the 'Psychology of Serial Killers' at the Woodville Theatre on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> March. The students listened to a forensic expert's analysis of the mind and actions of serial killers, which supported wider aspects of the current social science course they are studying. The students found this event very enjoyable and gained insight into what could lead a person to become a serial killer, as well as how serial killers are categorised.



Mrs O. Collins. *Psychology Teacher.*

'I enjoyed the Psychology trip where I learnt about multiple categories of serial killers. I was most intrigued to learn about how most serial killers have experienced higher amounts of traumatic events in their childhood, compared to the general public.'

L. Geria. *Year 12.*

'The talk was informative and very interesting where I learnt about the diverse range serial killers including power killers.'

C. Beckham. *Year 12.*

## Year 7 Speech and Language

Sixteen Year 7 students have been selected to trial a new software package for supporting students with speech, language and communication needs. The package uses robust assessments and targeted resources to help students in small groups, in a fun and informal way, to understand better the fundamentals of core language. Using an interactive platform, students are given scenarios that they have to solve. Last term, our Year 7s were tasked with finding out why the Senior Leader team at Aim High School had been food poisoned and this term they are unlocking the clues to find out why £500,000 has been stolen from Cipher Mansion.

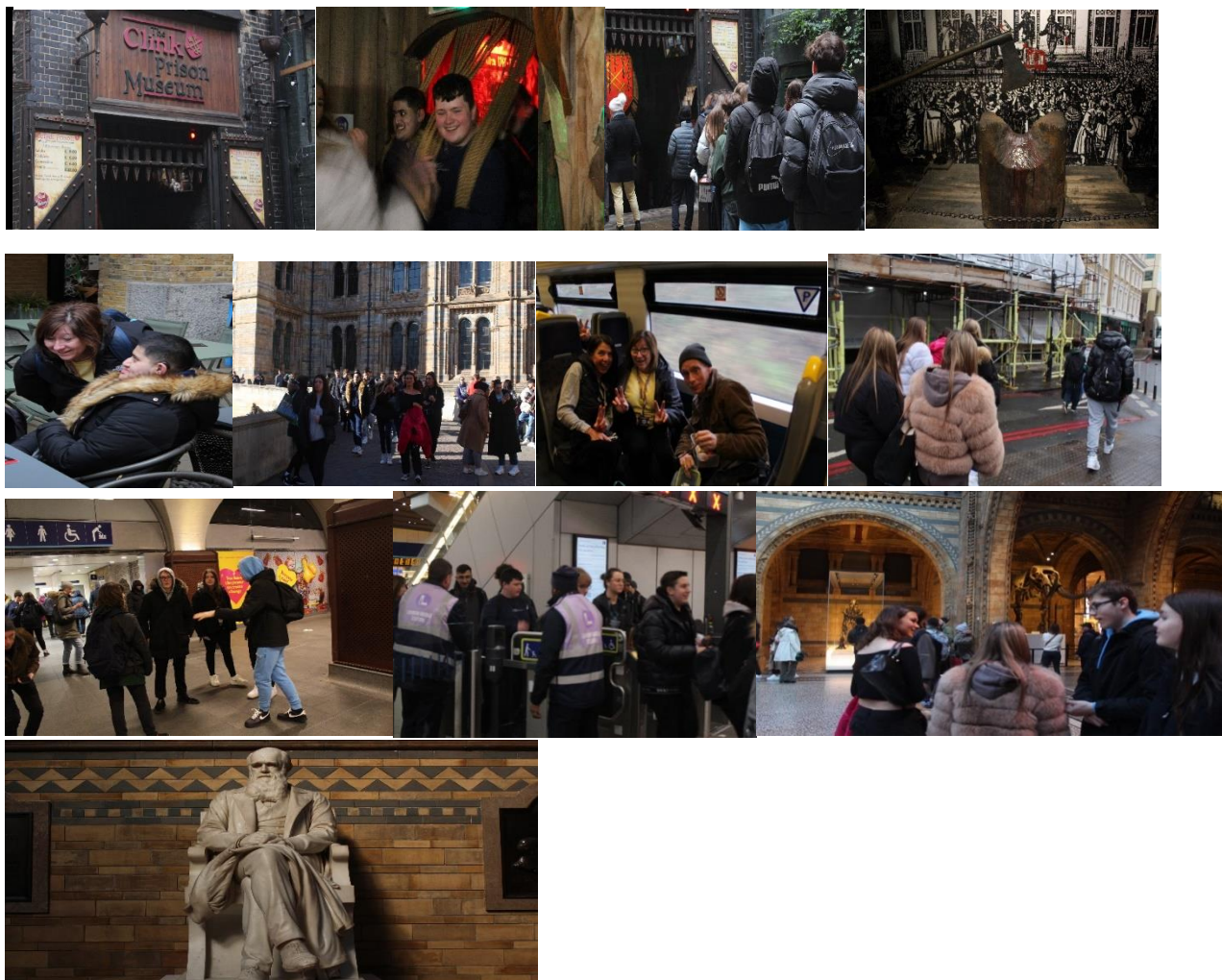
Speech and Language underpins our daily communication in so many ways, particularly in the classroom, and already we have seen great gains in our students' understanding of their core language and social language skills and look forward to rolling out the package to some of our Year 8 cohort soon.

Mrs J. Pickles. *Learning Support Assistant.*



## Return to Learn

Rewards trip to the Natural History Museum and The Clink Prison Museum.



Fund raising for Lollipop Charity (Sickle Cell Awareness)





### Medical care plans / Medication

Please note that students must be carrying their medication with them whilst in school and spare medication is for emergency use only and kept in our First Aid Room.

For school trips, students must be carrying their medication with them to be able to take part on the day.

Any outstanding medical care plans or medication must be returned to school as soon as possible.

Please check that your child's medication is in date and also check this with us, as this may mean that the spare medication we hold may also have expired.

Please inform us as soon as possible if there is a change with your child's medical need.

Have a lovely Easter.

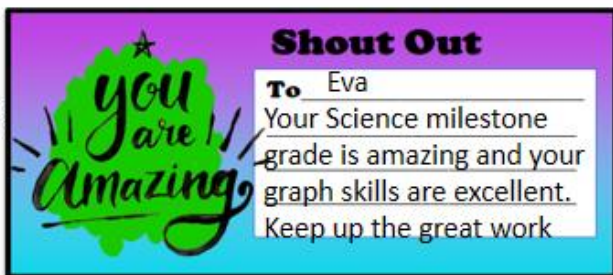
Mrs S. Munday and Mrs A. Thompson.

Return to Learn



## Year 8 Celebrating Unlimited Possibilities and Positivity

- Imagination is everything. It is the preview of life's coming attractions.  
Albert Einstein
- The Year 8 cohort is filled with unlimited potential and it is our desire to tap into this potential and help our students to make the very most of their abilities. We believe that our students have the capacity and capability to dream big without limits and to achieve these dreams, and so we seek to uplift and encourage their greatness.



- We have chosen to use positive means of recognizing our students. Using positivity cards, where every student in the year group is positively highlighted and rewarded for their contributions. In addition, extending a positive hand of friendship was also used to remind students of the benefits of positive communication and the impact of both methods were amazing.



- The wings are symbolic of unlimited possibilities, created in the colors of our communities/houses with a splash of orange and modelled by the creators of the wings.
- This opportunity gave the students a common positive theme to bond over; all believing that they are capable and able to accomplish their dreams. All our efforts seek to embody and encapsulate the ethos of St. John's; we are resolved that within all of our students is greatness.





## KS3 Celebrating our students' Excellent A2L and homework

Ruby W Kajus M	Emils L Evie D	Lucie B Max W
Finn O Jack T	Irene E Bowo A	Matthew A
Hannah F Paulina M	Aidan G Terrel B	Nya C Amelia H

**KS3 Wall of Excellence**  
Hard work gains recognition and reward.



Chloe C Amelia M	Jessica C Jonathan O	Hajiratu B Ben H
Ollie H Jaskiret T	Maxime F Genevieve W	Ruby M Julia P
Callum P Miya G	Kiril A Diana A	Eve E Patryk D



**Below are some examples of students' voice on the impact of attitude to learning and homework on their academic progress.**

- Your attitude to learning is a direct link to your progress in school and how you progress outside of school.
- Our attitude to learning can affect other students learning and future learning!
- A positive attitude to learning will affect all our subjects and we are able to achieve better grades.

- Teachers are able to provide us with excellent support and feedback when we complete our homework.
- Homework helps to show how much of the content you are understanding.
- You could miss out on things learnt if you have a poor attitude to learning and do not complete your homework.



## KS3 Celebrating our students' for Academic Excellence

Bryony W Dominic M	Diljot B Olivia L	Chetna S Rhoda E
Jayden P Ula R	Cayden S Poppie R	Krystian J Jesse E
Alexandra P Sam B	Imogen M Ben S	Zofia Z Eden P



Sebastian Z Anthony R	Millen D Jasveer S	Parmmeet S Leyla A
David H Emily W	Abigail S Sophia H	Ita H Hannon P
Harrison C Ugonna C	Christabelle M	Vilte G



**Below are some examples of students' voices on how they prepare themselves for academic success.**

- I believe that having a good mind-set towards my lessons is key because this will allow me to be open to learn more.
- I make and use my study cards to help prepare for my tests and create a revision schedule that helps me stay on track with my revision.
- I attend homework club and my teachers help by having revision lessons.

- I listen in lessons, revise a lot and work hard.
- I ensure that I am clear on what I am meant to be revising, then I do it.
- I remain motivated. I do this by looking at my previous good grades and motivate myself with this.
- I exploit my natural talent by using it to make revising fun.



## Safeguarding

### Digital Wellbeing

Digital wellbeing relates to the use of technology (including games and apps) which can impact on an individual's life, both positively and negatively. This can be a difficult area to target because everyone's experiences are different, but it can be useful to discuss with your child aspects that can support digital wellbeing (e.g. positive influences) and what can affect digital wellbeing (e.g. exposure to abuse).

South West Grid for Learning have a really good article, as well as signposting to useful resources including wellbeing tools on apps (such as TikTok, Instagram and YouTube).

**REPORTREMOVE** – is to help young people under 18 in the UK to confidentially report sexual images and videos of themselves and remove them from the internet. It is operated via the NSPCC's childline service using the skillset of the Internet Watch Foundation.

### For Parents - What is Misogyny?

The continual media reporting of people like Andrew Tate combined with the algorithms used within the likes of social media means that misogynistic content is everywhere. There is only so much that can be done in school, parents need to be having conversations at home, but these conversations can be difficult, particularly if you don't know where to start.

Internet Matters have put some great resources together to help with this, including a video, where children might see this type of content online, terms to know and tips to tackle misogyny.

### For Parents - Video Games and Reading

As much as people talk about the negatives of gaming, games playing can be hugely beneficial in many ways, such as teamwork, problem solving, critical thinking and so much more, including reading.

This is particularly true for those children who are reluctant to read or who are struggling.

Andy Robertson from Ask About Games has put together a great little selection of games which you can find using the following link:

[www.askaboutgames.com/news/great-video-games-that-get-children-excited-about-reading](http://www.askaboutgames.com/news/great-video-games-that-get-children-excited-about-reading)

### TikTok Guardian's Guide

There have been quite a few updates to TikTok over recent months there is an updated guide for parents which includes family pairing, digital wellbeing, privacy and more.

You can find the updated guide by following this link: [www.tiktok.com/safety/en/guardians-guide](https://www.tiktok.com/safety/en/guardians-guide)





## Parents - Conversation Starters

Parenting the digital world is difficult, no-one can deny that. For many of us we didn't grow up in a world of technology, therefore we don't have 'lived experience', we're just trying our best. One of the questions that is regularly asked is, "How do I start the conversation?"

With the exploitation of children getting significantly worse each year, those conversations are so important. The Internet Watch Foundation have put together a brilliant guide for parents. It's about a year old now, but still has some very valuable and useful information within the guide.

You can find the guide by following this link: <https://talk.iwf.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Parent-Resource.pdf>

Mrs O. Kelham. *Senior Assistant Headteacher (Safeguarding & Child Protection)*.

## Chaplain's Corner

Please contain your dismay when you read this.

I prefer Easter to Christmas. I just love the drama!

For me, Holy Week shows humanity at its very best, along with the frailties and imperfections that make us wonderfully human.

Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> April is Palm Sunday. Jesus arrives back in Jerusalem to glorious rapture. Crowds line the streets, ecstatic with excitement as they welcome Jesus as their conquering hero. Goodness, how the mood changes by Thursday evening. Judas betrays Jesus; He is arrested and Peter even denies knowing Our Lord. Not once but three times. Then by Friday, mob mentality really takes over. Jesus is condemned to death and is crucified.

Amongst the backdrop of deceit, betrayal, and sadness of Holy Week, we see shoots of hope beginning to emerge. Tenderness as Jesus meets His Mother Mary, as he is jeered through the streets of Jerusalem. Mary's acceptance of God's plan for her Son, even though she is yet to fully understand what that is. Simon of Cyrene, forced by the Romans to help Christ carry The Cross, does so despite the backlash of his fellow Jews. Jesus, not too proud to accept help when offered. Then a young St John – our very own St John The Evangelist – standing at the foot of the cross. The only Disciple not to flee in fear. Although John feels helpless, he does not abandon his friend in His hour of need. John is courageous, steadfast, and compassionate, taking Mary into his care after Jesus dies.

We all hope to experience, love, peace of mind, health, happiness and joy in our lives - pushing aside past hurts and misdemeanours. Easter is the perfect opportunity to examine our own lives. We are given the chance to brush an old way of life away, replacing sadness, drama and resentment with peace, hope, joy, and love. Our lives and spirits can be resurrected on Easter Day. This is a time for us to look forward, see the beauty within ourselves and everyone we encounter. We can choose to be supportive as Simon, tender and accepting as Mary. Display the courage and compassion of St John. Always knowing we are Inspired by Christ's love.

This Easter may we all be graced with the Joy, Peace, Love and Hope of the Resurrection. I pray we are blessed with new beginnings and a fresh outlook for our lives.

God Bless you all.

Susanne Gibbons, Chaplain.

