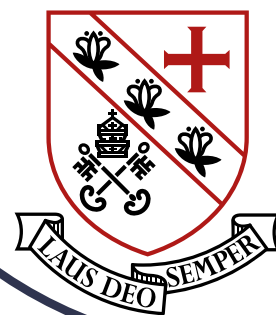


St Joseph's Newsletter



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

In the season of Advent as we approach the end of another busy and successful term at St Joseph's, I would like to take this opportunity to thank students, staff and parents for supporting the work of the college over the last few months.

This has been a long term filled with trips, sports events and enrichment activities. Recent highlights include our Performing Arts evening, the Literature Festival, the fantastic response from parents and students to our charity appeals and our victorious Year 9 Boys rugby team. I am extremely proud of all those involved.

Education in Swindon has been in the news this term. Mr Bradley Simmons, Ofsted regional director for the South West has made public comments about standards in the town and what he described as failings at every key stage. It would not be appropriate for me to comment on other schools, but I would like to briefly address some of the specific concerns made about secondary provision with facts related to St. Joseph's.

Mr Simmons said, "At key stage 4, pupils' outcomes raise concerns. Headline measures for these pupils are below national across the board. It is also worrying to see so few pupils at Swindon secondary schools achieving the English Baccalaureate. Just 17.3% of pupils were successful in 2016, which places Swindon in

the bottom 20 local authorities in England for this measure."

For St Joseph's, headline measures are above national and in English and Maths significantly above these measures. Regarding the English Baccalaureate (A* - C including English maths, science, a language and a humanity subject) 37% of St Joseph's pupils achieved this measure compared with 25% nationally. Unfortunately, the government does not allow us to count our very strong RE results in the humanity part of the English Baccalaureate which would raise our results even higher.

Mr Simmons also raises concerns about exclusions. "The proportion of pupils receiving a fixed-term exclusion is alarmingly high in both secondary and special schools in Swindon. The 2015 data shows that the fixed-period exclusions per pupil in secondary schools were 10.08% compared to the national average of 7.51%."

Last year St Joseph's had the lowest number of fixed term exclusion of any secondary school in the Swindon area (0.98 % of the pupil population). These outcomes reflect the hard

work done by our staff and in particular our pastoral team.

I have the highest respect for Ofsted and the job they do holding schools to account. With any accountability measures it is important to look at the detail and I hope that parents and carers will see from this specific information how St. Joseph's measures up against the broad criticisms of the Swindon area made by Mr Simmons.

Schools are complex places and each one has issues unique to its own situation. All schools are facing some common difficulties with cuts in funding and the recruitment of staff among the core challenges. Addressing these issues will be the key to making all Swindon schools better for the local community.

On behalf of everyone here at St Joseph's I would like to wish you a happy and peaceful Christmas.

Paul Hughes, Principal



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

16 DEC	Sixth Form Application Deadline
16 DEC	College closes to Students 12.50pm
3 JAN	College reopens to Students
3 JAN	Year 12 and 13 Mock Examinations commence
18 JAN	Rock School Concert
19 JAN	Year 9 Options Evening
26 JAN	Year 9 Parents Evening - (KLMN)
27 JAN	Science Challenge Day
1 FEB	Year 9 Parents Evening - (PQRS)
3 FEB	Year 9 Options Deadline
8 FEB	Key Stage 4 and 5 Performing Arts Evening
10 FEB	College closes to Students
20 FEB	College reopens to Students
13 MAR	Staff Training Day
22 MAR	Year 10 Parents evening (ABLM)
28 MAR	Year 10 Parents evening (CESW)
27 MAR	National Science Week
29 APR	Pop Up Uniform Shop
4 APR	Easter Services
7 APR	College Closes to Students
24 APR	College opens to Students

Student Reviews

The first Year 7 assessment review for this Academic year has now been published.

As you are aware, the college has moved to paperless production of student reviews and these are instead visible to you via the Parent Portal.

The Year 7 review provides you with a snap shot of the current progress your child is making at St. Joseph's.

The assessments carried out in all subject areas throughout Key Stage 3 will provide teachers with the evidence of how much progress towards these target grades your child is making. Teachers will award your child a progress score to indicate how well they are working towards their target grades.

The progress scores are ranked as follows:

P1 exceptional progress - current grades suggest the student will achieve above their target grades at the end of Year 11.

P2 above expected progress - current grades suggest the student will achieve the top end of their projected range of grades at the end of Year 11.

P3 expected progress - current grades suggest the student will achieve a grade within their projected range of target grades at the end of Year 11.

P4 below expected progress - current grades suggest the student will achieve a grade below their target grades at the end of Year 11.

P5 significantly below expected progress - current grades suggest the student will achieve a grade significantly below their target grades at the end of Year 11.

These progress grades should indicate to you the extent to which your child is developing their understanding of the Key Stage 3 curriculum and acquiring the necessary skills to achieve their target grades in the GCSE examinations.

Winter Closures

As temperatures drop we should remind you that if it becomes necessary to close the college for any reason, please listen to the local radio station for emergency information. Details of any closure will be posted on the school website. We will also try to send a message if we have up to date contact information.

Please let us know if you have recently changed your email address or mobile phone number so we can update our records.

ParentPay

In an attempt to remove all cash and cheques from the college, we are asking all parents to only use our e-payment method to pay for dinner money, trips, revision guides, and other equipment. This can be done online using a very secure website called ParentPay or in cash at local stores where you see the PayPoint logo.

If you already have a ParentPay account, either with our school or another ParentPay school, you can simply login to that account and add your other children via the “add a child” tab on your home page.

ParentPay holds an electronic record of your payments to view at a later date.

Once you have activated your account you can make online payments straight away.

Please do not hesitate to contact Reception on 01793 714200 if you need assistance or for those parents wishing to pay cash to request the option of paying via PayPoint.

We have a large number of students going through the canteen every day, paying by card speeds up this process considerably. It also means parents can manage costs of lunches and equipment easily, by doing it online.

Canteen Cashless Catering

After Christmas in the canteen there will be 3 tills that will take cards only and one till for cash. If you are still paying by cash the queue is likely to be a long one.

Please make every effort to use Parent Pay.

PARENT PORTAL

As well as producing paperless student reviews, Parent Portal allows you to view Attendance, Timetable, Rewards and Sanctions information and also the College Calendar. Information in connection with Timetable, Examinations, Options, Trips, Calendar, Attendance, parents Evenings etc. will all be available on Parent Portal.

This is a valuable tool for parents, and we recommend that you view this regularly. If you have not yet registered for your Parent Portal access, you can still do so.

You will need to come into the College with a form of primary identification, such as a Passport or Driving Licence and proof of your current address, this can be a named utility or council tax bill. This is to ensure data is suitably protected.

You can register at the College Reception between 8am and 5pm during term time, or 8am and 4pm during College holidays. Please note that the College is closed on Bank Holidays and some selected days over the Christmas period.

FOR ALL PARENTS

The new GCSE grades consist of numbers from 1 (the lowest grade) to 9 (the highest grade).

The guide below shows the comparisons for the current and new grading structure.

The image shows a table from Ofqual titled 'New GCSE grading structure'. It compares the new grading structure (grades 1-9) with the current grading structure (grades A*-U). A callout box for grade 6 indicates it is a 'GOOD PASS (D/E)' and is '1 and above = top of C and above'. A callout box for grade 4 indicates it is 'AWARDING' and '4 and above = bottom of C and above'.

New grading structure	Current grading structure
9	
8	A*
7	A
6	B
5	
4	C
3	D
2	E
1	F
	G
U	U

Attendance

The College has a dedicated phone number for attendance. It is 01793 714236. Please use this number when reporting an absence for your child.

Reminder to Parents

Due to the colder weather arriving, can all parents ensure that students have a coat available in school. If students are excused from PE they are expected to stay with their PE teacher which may result in them being outside for the lesson.

Thank you in advance, from the PE Department.

Examination Certificates

Have you collected your GCSE and A level examination certificates yet? If not they are available from College reception. These are important documents that future employers are likely to ask for and should be collected and kept securely.

Culverhouse Road Parking Update

The College site is closed to cars between 2.45pm and 3.15pm in order to limit the risk posed to the large number of pedestrians leaving the site at the end of the school day.

Some parents who wish to pick their children up at 3.00pm have been choosing to park in the nearby Railway-Sidings housing estate, on Culverhouse Road. Local residents have complained about this parking causing an inconvenience by blocking drop-curb driveways and by obstructing pedestrian access to the pavement, with cars mounting the curb.

We would like to urge all parents who wish to pick-up their children at 3.00pm to use the Tesco carpark nearest the College. There is plenty of room for parking and the children can walk safely to the carpark along Ocotal Way without having to cross the road, which is necessary to reach Culverhouse Road.

We would greatly appreciate it if parents could stop using Culverhouse Road as a pick up point. Thank you for your support in this matter.

Mr. Stoten, Assistant Principal KS3

UCAS Applications



University applications are in full swing. Students are being given advice and guidance on their applications, university and course choices and personal statements. We check all our students' applications before they are sent to UCAS and provide an academic reference supporting their application. All this helps our students to secure offers from their chosen universities.

For the third consecutive year some students have received unconditional offers based on their AS results. We also have students attending the universities of Oxford and Cambridge for interviews over the next few weeks. Pictured are Melissa and Cynthia who were the first students to receive an offer from all five of their chosen universities.

Good luck to all to each of our Year 13 students in their UCAS applications!

CHRISTMAS CARE



St Joseph's Catholic College students have dug deep to help those in need this festive season by donating dozens of crates of food to Christmas Care. The donations from students were warmly welcomed by Christmas Care chairman Patsy Moloney.

The pop-up shelter, which first opened its doors 29 years ago, provides a welcome sanctuary for people living on the streets, living on low income or who are alone during the festive period from Christmas Eve until December 28.

The sixth form students decided to take on the mammoth project after hearing about the struggles of the charity and after holding an assembly with the entire school, pupils went out and bought in their masses much-needed items including tinned food and cupboard essentials.

A story on this was run by the Swindon Advertiser which can be accessed from the following link.

www.swindonadvertiser.co.uk/news/14936476.
Students_dig_deep_to_help_the_homeless



Former Student's Success

On Wednesday 7th September 2016, Sidney graduated from the University of Lincoln achieving a BA Hons Degree in Audio Production after an amazing 3 years for him at Lincoln and Moorhead University of Minnesota in the States. Sid's parents wrote:

"We, Sid's parents, are so proud of him and wanted to say again a massive thank you to you all there at St. Joseph's Catholic College which set him in the right direction and equipped him with an education that enabled this."

Canterbury Design a Rugby Shirt Workshop

St Joseph's Catholic College is delighted to be part of the RFU All Schools' Rugby Programme and in October four of our young rugby enthusiasts were invited to design a new match shirt for the college with Canterbury (designers of the England rugby kit).

They travelled to Trowbridge Rugby Club where one of Canterbury's experienced designers spoke about what to consider when creating their own unique look.

After much consideration our students put pen to paper and came up with a stunning design.

Their design, inspired by the college uniform features the college crest and motto LAUS DEO SEMPER "Praise always to God".

The design was a big hit with the PE department and they and the

students are eagerly awaiting the arrival of the match shirts in the New Year.



KS4 get a taste of university life



Working in collaboration with Study Higher and Oxford Pathways has enabled many students in KS4 to visit a university this term. Thirty-five Year 10 students visited Oxford Brookes and participated in a tour of the University's Headington Campus. They also spent the day taking part in a range of activities with current Brookes students exploring different aspects of higher education.

One of the activities involved learning about the different student societies at Oxford Brookes, where students came up with their own society and presented their ideas to the group.

Forty-five students in Year 11 were fortunate to visit either St Anne's or Merton College, Oxford or the University of Reading where they participated in revision workshops and taster lectures with current undergraduates. They were also given information about student finance and took part in an informal discussion about university life with the student ambassadors.

Chaplaincy Team Commissioning



On 6th October 2016, members of the College Chaplaincy Team attended the Chaplaincy Team commissioning service at Clifton Cathedral.

We joined both primary and secondary pupils from other schools in the diocese.

The service started with all the schools forming a procession with their school banners. The service was calm, tranquil and respectful but fun as well. The service ended with us being presented with certificates and badges.

It was an excellent start to our role of chaplaincy in the College.

Joe 10E

BICYCLE MAINTENANCE

Come along to have your bike fixed by our bike medic Lew Lawton every Wednesday 3pm – 4pm at the bicycle racks starting 11th January. Security marking available for all bikes – especially new bikes from Christmas.

Sixth Form Trip to Oxford



The benefits of getting the Year 12 Art Students out to Oxford was priceless. So much extra educational value is added and this feeds into the classwork and extends their understanding and application. The value of these days can never be underestimated.

The day consisted of recording the architecture in a multi-sensory way. Taking in the atmosphere and the environment and making drawings, sketches, notes and observations.

The next part of the day was spent at Modern Art Oxford where we had a fantastic tour of the exhibition and engaged in some very challenging contemporary art. It then culminated in a workshop of screen printing.

The students were impeccable and highly praised the day. We are lucky to have developed such great links with external providers. Well done to all. It was a pleasure to be part of your educational journey.

Visit by Dave Cousins



On Tuesday 8th November, Year 8 were given the opportunity to see author Dave Cousins.

He presented his extraordinary books in a humorous manner and told us how he simply got inspired. Dave explained his biography when growing up and his wildest dreams as a young lad.

I really valued how down to earth he was, when describing his stories that almost everyone could relate to as Year 8's; yes, it will be a challenge but we will always reach our goals at some point of our lives. Dave showed us that you should never give up until you find what's best for you. You can explore wondrous things in your life but if you always try you will reach your goal.

I am utterly excited to have a copy of his book, '15 Days Without A Head'... at the moment I have just started it however I am already sinking into the book.

In summary overall I enjoyed this event and I would definitely recommend you read one of his books.

Sean Maponga 8D

CHRIS RIDDELL TRIP



We really enjoyed the trip especially the beginning because Chris was drawing characters and the principal from Ridgeway School. He started off with sharpening his pencil then talking about how he became an illustrator by talking and drawing.

Later on, near the end, he answered our questions. He also told us about his Instagram page. In the end we bought books which we could get signed if we wanted to, as well as photo opportunity with Chris.

**Callum Marshall and
Jakub Adamczyk**

'It was fun because the drawing was funny and it looked really good.'

'I found it very entertaining and I found out how everyday things are inspiring.'

Visit by Poet Ash Dickinson

Year 7 all got the chance to see Ash Dickenson. He's a poet and you can find him on You Tube. He writes poems about the things he sees in life; he told us a story about when he was on a train and he went by a boy punching snow. He got out his journal and read us the poem and it was full of sensory descriptions. He was warm hearted and friendly and he made a really funny joke, one of my friends laughed really hard.

He asked us what we thought a poet looks like, a lot of people said they thought he'd look like a really old man, but Ash was really young and wore cool clothes and he had a hat, so he was trying to change the way that young people think of poets and poetry and that poets can be funny and relevant.

We wrote a Japanese Haiku using the 5 senses, imagining it was Halloween. He then covered up some



of the words and some of us went up to read to show how he wrote the 'Punch in the Snow' poem. I'm really glad I got the chance to see Ash -thank you, I'll NEVER forget it!

Sarah Dotto De Camargo

Medaille Trust Project

The Medaille trust help victims of human trafficking and help them recover from years of torment.

After the director from the Medaille Trust came to talk to us, we were so shocked and overwhelmed about how serious and close to home human trafficking is actually happening.

They accommodate victims in safe houses and provide them with essentials such as food, clothes and toiletries- but most importantly a safe place to stay. The desperate need for night wear and clothes was expressed, so myself and a few Year 13s (Chelsea O'Neill, Gabriela Caruso, Charlotte Daley, Kacie Codling, Francesca Mancari, Pearl D'Souza, Iona Anthony, Shania Bamford, Emily Picton and Ciara O'Neill) really wanted to help.

We organised a very successful cake sale in order to raise money to buy and create 14 nightwear packs. Also, Chelsea and I went into assemblies to promote and ask our community to help and support us.

We then went out to Primark to buy clothes and



accessories and then myself, Kacie, Charlotte, Iona and Pearl came together and made 14 packs for the women in the Swindon safe house. This has been a very successful project and we are so happy with the outcome! We hope our small gesture has helped make a difference to those who need it.

Annamaria Mazzotta

POETRY LIVE



8S have been very fortunate to take part in a Poetry project with Hilda Sheehan from the Richard Jefferies Museum. They will be taking part in a four week programme combining music and poetry to support their Poetry module in English. We are very grateful to Hilda, musicians John and Aidan and the Arts Council for their support and are looking forward to the next few weeks working with them. Watch this space!
Mrs Fraser

European Day of Languages

Congratulations, or rather félicitations, to all the Year 7s who completed the treasure hunt to celebrate European Day of Languages on 26th September.

It was a great success and pupils managed to work out how to say "hello" in all the recognised European languages.

Particular congratulations to Monifa Rodrigues, Paige Parawira, Daniel Best Tellez, Klara Borczuch, Roan Castle, Lucia Beggan and Connor Duncan who were the first to finish for their tutor groups.

À l'année prochaine!



Fred Blunt Workshop



On the 8th of November, a small team of Year 10s went to Nova Hreod Academy to take part in the Fred Blunt workshop.

He told us about his work and how he got to the point he was at. We looked at some of his artwork to inspire us for when we were to create our own illustrations based on one of three prompts. After selecting one, we drew out some concept illustrations for the characters from different angles and with different expressions before moving on to create our final pieces. It was a great experience and gave us an insight as to what it would be like to have a career in art.

“I am the Vine, you are the branches..”

This term Mrs Barkham and Mrs Mobey have welcomed Year 9 and Year 11 tutor groups to the Chapel for class liturgies.



During the liturgy we have reflected on Jesus' words to his disciples: “I am the Vine, you are the branches” and considered the different ways in which we, as the fruit of St Joseph's vine, can bear fruit in our communities.

Each tutor group have left their mark on what is shaping up to be a large St Joseph's vine for display in the Chapel. We look forward to reflecting with all of the tutor groups over the year.

Murder Mystery



For Activities Week, Year 9 and 10 embarked on a Murder Mystery trail with a difference...

Their mission was to find out who had murdered Ebenezer Scrooge. Scrooge had been found dead in the street in the early hours of the morning and, not being the most well-loved of Dickens' characters, there were plenty of suspects! These included Mrs Danvers from Daphne Du Maurier's 'Rebecca', The Creature from 'Frankenstein', Count Dracula, Tiny Tim, Miss Havisham, Mr Edward Hyde and Jane Eyre's Bertha Mason.

Just to get them in the mood the English staff dressed up as the suspects - Mrs Ash making a particularly terrifying yet glamorous Dracula!

After listening to the evidence, viewing the murder scene and weapon, receiving real-time 'breaking news' and interviewing the suspects students worked in teams and detecting, debating and discounting the suspects until the murderer was identified...

Sorry, we're not going to tell you - you'll have to ask them!

CAFOD Young Volunteers

Dave Wheat from the Clifton Diocese Youth Ministry has visited the college twice to meet with us.



He welcomed us onto the Young Volunteers programme and has given us an insight in to what CAFOD does and what we could do to help. We discussed some of the issues that people who are living in poverty face and how this can have an impact on our planet.

To help raise awareness we will be giving a presentation during Collective Worship and visiting the Year 7 during Citizenship. The last day of term will be a non-school uniform day with the money collected used to purchase gifts from CAFOD's World Gifts. This is excellent way to support people living in poverty overseas this Christmas.

Delcy

Boulogne-sur-Mer Trip



Last July saw the annual St Joseph's Year 7 invasion of Boulogne-sur-Mer for another successful trip to France. The students had the opportunity to practise their French, sample some local cuisine and learn about the history of this beautiful sea-side town.

A great day was had despite the connection back to England being missed; ever resourceful, our students staged an impromptu dance-off at the terminal.

À l'année prochaine !

Year 6 Open evening



We were in charge of introducing the Year 6s and their parents to our chapel.

We explained how the chapel is used throughout the school year. We said how important chaplaincy is to our college community. As well as this we had set up a range of activities including decorating some angels and writing prayers.

It was a great opportunity for us to express our personal experiences as Year 11 students, how we have a great time in chaplaincy with the chance to go on trips, join other groups and connect with the large community.

Ellie and Kate Year 11

Memories of our trip to France in July

With the cold winter now here, we have been fondly remembering our school trip to France in July.

Forty students with Mr Brown, Mr Matyla, Mrs Hogan and Mrs Parker took a ferry from Portsmouth to Ouistreham in Normandy – eventful mostly for the number of inflated balloon sculptures which were floating around!

We stayed at a hostel next to the beach in Normandy for three nights and enjoyed our sports, games and relaxing time in the grounds and on the beach, paddling in the sea. The weather was great!

The Normandy battlefield sites of the Second World War were truly memorable, with highlights such as the Pegasus Bridge site where British gliders and paratroopers seized the vital river crossing

on D-Day 1944. The American National cemetery (with nearly 10,000 graves) and the Bayeux British cemetery helped to bring home to the group the sacrifice so many had made to defeat Hitler's Germany in the War. We also explored the Bayeux Tapestry, at nearly 1000 years old a real must-see for Historians of all ages.

The group then had two days in the parks at Disneyland Paris to relax at the end of the school year, staying at the Explorers Hotel nearby. It was incredibly hot, but the rides were fun!

On our last day the group spent time exploring the Somme

Battlefield. It was exactly 100 years after the Battle had taken place and to visit sites such as the crater at La Boiselle (where a mine had been exploded just minutes before the attack on 1st July 1916), Newfoundland Park (where we walked across no-man's land between the two front line trenches) and finally the Thiepval Memorial (to the missing soldiers of the Somme battle whose bodies were never recovered) was an experience we will never forget.

The visit was fun and also very moving. I am glad we were able to take part in a trip which we can look back on so warmly.

Change of Address

If you move house or update your telephone number, please can you ensure you notify the College as soon as possible. Many thanks for your co-operation.



Fantastic Beasts!

8S were very lucky to have their own private cinema screening of the new film at Empire Cinemas.

They have been working hard on the fiction module and this was the perfect way to finish their studies on this topic. They have been creating their own creatures so to see different creations on the screen was a real treat.

Thank you to Empire Cinemas and to Miss White for their help with organising this special trip.

Mrs Fraser

TEAM MATHS CHALLENGES

St Joseph's were represented in the Senior Team Challenge by Amy Lloyd, Danielle Cockram, Joe Inglis and Baron Gracias.

This was the first experience of team challenges for them, and they took part with great enthusiasm – thanks to Mr Aitken for taking them.

Year 8 and 9 is in April, and for the first time there is a team challenge for years 10 and 11 – if you are in top set maths and would like to take part do speak to Mr Davies.

The Junior Challenge for

Give us your news

We continue to post regular news items of St Joseph's events and accomplishments on our college website (many of which are written by our student journalists).

If you have any newsworthy stories about our students' achievements, please let us know so we can endeavor to include them on the website.

Individual Maths Challenges

Congratulations to all those who achieved certificates in the Senior Maths Challenge.

Steve Caayao, Danielle and Joe got Gold certificates and have qualified for the Senior Kangaroo, an international individual follow-on round.

Danielle also separately took part in the Maths Olympiad for Girls, a 3-hour written paper, and was awarded a Distinction. In the individual challenge we also got 5 Silver certificates and 4 bronze certificates.

WELL DONE TO ALL!

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS SERVICE

For the past few weeks at St Joseph's, we have been rehearsing for another Christmas Service. Students from Year 8 to Year 10 are involved.

This wonderful service has made Christmas at

St Joseph's a magical time while keeping the religious aspect. We aim to do something a little bit different this year to capture the attention of all students and staff, portraying the Christmas story in another way.

We hope people enjoy it as much as we do. We have had great fun rehearsing and performing it.

A big thank you to Mrs Mobey for writing this wonderful Service for us.

YEAR 11 BTEC PERFORMANCE OF HUMPTY DUMPTY



On Tuesday 15th November the Year 11 BTEC Drama Group performed the play Humpty Dumpty to all the Year 7 groups.

Not only was this performance part of their exam coursework but the play also linked in with the College's anti-bullying week. A great performance well done to all the students who took part! The play was directed by Mr Halpin who joined the Performing Arts department in September.

BUGSY MALONE

This year's Summer production will be Buggy Malone. Auditions will be held after Christmas. All the audition material can be found on Moodle in the Music Section. Please come and see Mrs Cooke if you have any questions or email mcooke@stjosephscollege.net

YEAR 13 BTEC & YEAR 10/11 GCSE MUSIC CONCERT

15th November 2016

This year's exam concert was again a wonderful opportunity to see the fantastic work that our students are doing for their exam coursework.

The first half of the concert featured the Year 13 Level 3 BTEC Group. As part of their exam they had to rehearse and perform a Musical Theatre Unit. The students put together a wide variety of songs and with the guidance of Mrs Mobey, Miss Squires and Mrs Fleet. All their hard work paid off with a fabulous performance!

The Year 10 and 11 GCSE Music Students performed in the second half of the concert, which features solos from Owen Lee

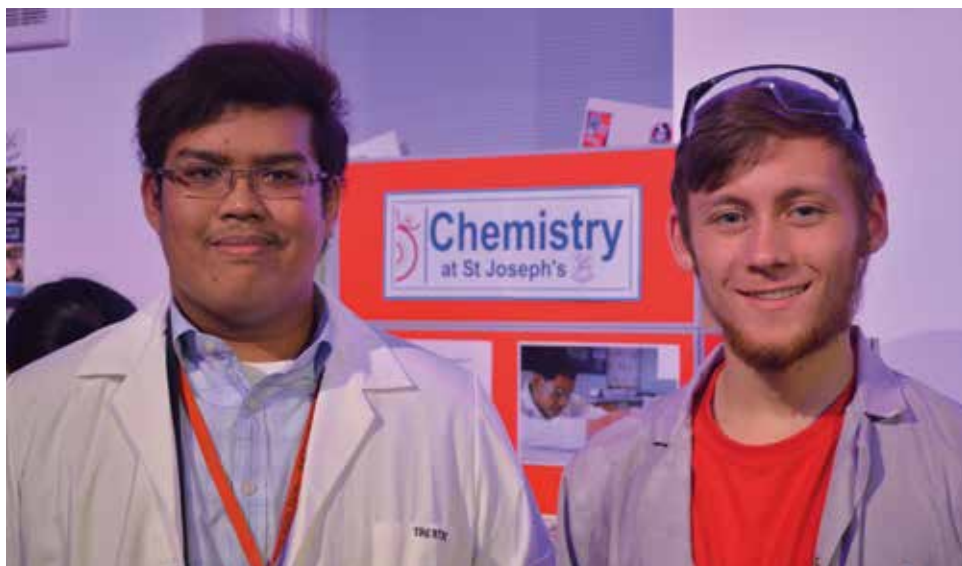


on the Trumpet, Stella Cobbson singing and playing the piano, Jake Skittrall on the drums, John Hunter performing on the recorder and to close the concert a beautiful version of Elton Johns' Your Song, performed by Winona Maningo.

The Year 11 GCSE group, performed their own 'mash up' arrangement of Moondance/Billie Jean, which was directed by Stella Cobbson.

The concert also featured performances of students compositions.

SIXTH FORM OPEN EVENING



We were very pleased to see so many of our Year 11 students at the Sixth Form Open Evening last month. It is important for students to gain as much advice and information about their Post-16 options to enable them to make informed decisions.

As well as being able to speak to subject teachers, Year 11 students were able to listen to our current Sixth Form students who acted as ambassadors on the evening. This provides prospective applicants with a real sense of life in the Sixth Form and the challenges that studying at 'A' level brings.

We also had representatives from the University of Oxford and Gloucester University who were able to advise on degree courses and subjects required. Swindon College were also present to speak to students about vocational courses available.

The Sixth Form application form is now live on our website, with many students already submitting applications to study with us next year. We look forward to discussing your Post-16 ambitions when interviews start in the New Year.

If you have any questions or queries about your future destinations, please email Mrs Baxter, jbaxter@stjosephscollege.net, who will be able to arrange for you to meet with a member of the Sixth Form team.

Sixth Form Charitable Work

We are always very proud of the time and energy our Sixth Form give to raising funds for various charitable trusts. This term has involved a cake sale to raise money for the Medaille Trust and also overseeing the 'Supermarket Sweep', where the Sixth Form raced around to all tutor groups to collect the very large amount of food and clothing kindly donated by our KS3 and KS4 students. The Sixth Form will now sort all the donations into boxes before helping to deliver to various organisations in time for the festive season.

Students have also recently opened a Café for the Sixth Form and staff. This can be found on the balcony of the Chapel every Thursday and Friday. Coffee, tea, crisps and sweets are available with profits being donated to our designated charities.

University of Gloucester Mentoring

We continue for the fourth year of being involved with the mentoring scheme provided by the University of Gloucester.

We have eight students this year who will have the support of a mentor to guide them through looking at degree courses, CV writing, student finance and preparing for university life.

The mentors are able to offer advice and guidance that will promote the aspirations and confidence of the students involved in the scheme.

Employment & Apprenticeship Support

In order to support our Year 13 students who wish to go into employment and apprenticeships, we have arranged for a local recruitment company to come into College and speak about the current Swindon job market.

Office Angels will be advising students on how to prepare for interviews, what employers are looking for and what to include in your CV.

All this will help St Joseph's students be as prepared as possible when they leave us, after completing their exams, next summer.

Access to Bristol and On Track to Bath University

Each year we support the applications of many students who apply for the programmes offered by leading universities.

This year we have two students who have been successful in gaining places on the Access to Bristol University programme. Baron and Niamh will spend one afternoon a week for 10 weeks, at the University of Bristol attending subject masterclasses, lectures and seminars and gain a real opportunity to see what life at a leading university is really like.

On Track to Bath University

As well as this, we have eight students who have been successful in gaining a place on the On Track to Bath University two year scholarship programme. Deirdre, Rhea, Pearl, Jessel, Baron, Pranita, Elliot and Zaneta have selected science based programmes and will attend the University of Bath on a regular basis before a summer residential in July.

The Reading University Scholars programme is still open for applications, however Joe has already been selected to study on the mathematics strand the university offers, in the New Year.

On completion of these particular programmes, the students involved will receive conditional offers one grade lower than the published entry criteria. The universities regularly rank in the top for the country.

Work Experience

Recently we were able to find a placement with the Probationary Service for one of our Year 13 students. Alana shadowed a probation officer for a week and had access to court sessions, group and one-to-one sessions.

This valuable work experience re-affirmed Alana's career aim to work in this sector. Alana has recently submitted her UCAS application to study Criminology with Sociology at degree level.



Extra-Curricular Sport

We are now midway through the lunchtime Sixth Form Badminton League. Every week 60 Sixth Form students play their matches, with the winning pair gaining valuable points to progress up the league to the grand finale to be held in March.

We also have a Basketball Club once a week where the Sixth Form students show their skills in the hoops. The Sixth Form boys have also recently started football training and hope to get some matches against other school Sixth Forms in the New Year.



Duke of Edinburgh Award

Over the past year we have had the pleasure of working alongside twenty Silver award students and thirteen Gold award students.

We would like to congratulate the Silver award students who all passed their qualifying expedition in Dartmoor at the end of September and the Gold award students all passed their qualifying expedition in the Brecon Beacons in October.



A group of Year 13 students and I decided to participate in the Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award which tasked us with being independent for four days. We had to walk a minimum of eight hours over the four days and camp out in tents for three nights.

On the first day, the 8 hour rule meant that we had the opportunity to take in the beautiful scenery of the mountainous Wales, as well as resting our sore feet. Sadly, it all went uphill from here.

The second day brought its own challenges: the weather changed for the worse and then we had to conquer a huge hill. Whilst descending the huge hill one of the most memorable moments was watching Maria toppling over, bringing herself and Henry, halfway down the mountain. In continuation, on the third day we mustered our strength to tackle the challenge of the tough

Welsh terrain; this was probably the most liberating day as we knew that the next day we were going home as we all marched to the inspirational sound of the panpipes blazing from Henry's phone.

The final day came about and only with one last hiccup with Opeyemi and Sarah having a squabble about whether to go forward or forward (literally!), however we pressed on and reached the end in pretty good spirits.

Overall the award challenged our ability to navigate, camp and improved our resilience over the four days, which we were completely independent of our phones and warm beds. We would recommend the experience to anyone willing to overcome the pain of a million blisters!

Aaron Jennings

DofE was an incredible experience that very few will ever receive – and I'm not sure why. Of course, there is a mental break between Bronze and Silver so if someone did not enjoy the former then more likely than not they did not sign up for the latter. However, this mental break did not deter me and I wholly believe I made the right decision.

To many of us city people, the sight of cows and grass may seem disgusting, possibly even offensive, however DofE has really opened my eyes to the beauty that is the outside world. And cow pats. And potholes built into the countryside by secret ninjas that are just large enough and just inconspicuous enough to fit your entire foot in without realising. Not fun.

On our expedition we spent hours and hours in a close proximity with each other which greatly enriched our relationships with each other. Before DofE we were barely even friends, and now we occasionally greet each other in the street.

Walking may be one of the most mundane of tasks for us humans, but after walking 24km+ over three days it really makes you realise how much we have.

DofE is not for everyone. It probably wasn't even for me and yet a small voice in the back of my head told me, begged even, to experience it all again. And as for Gold Duke of Edinburgh, I'm still trying to find that small voice.

Stephen Caayao

YEAR 7 BOYS 5-A-SIDE FOOTBALL

The Year 7 5-a-side football team played in the qualifying round of the Swindon tournament and acquitted themselves very well. The team played some very good football on the day and were unlucky to not qualify for the next round.

Unfortunately the teams we were up against

had a considerable size advantage and when ability levels are largely even, especially in 5-a-side size makes a big (no pun intended) difference.

The experience will serve the team well going forward. Well done, lads, for your fighting spirit and never-say-die attitude.

Basketball Club – off to a Jump Start!

After losing access to our Sports hall, for most of last year, we are pleased to announce that the basketball club is now fully functioning and off to a great start.

Numbers have been fantastic – Year 7 turning out 20+ players; and the over 30+ players across the rest of the school. We look forward to building on this success and hope they are able to compete well in fixtures next term.

On a separate note... as good as it's been... it is still the PE Staff who come out trumps when playing killer! Practise those free-throws B-ballers!



The PE department would like to congratulate all athletes who took part this season and we look forward to seeing you perform for your tutor group at Sports Day.

SWINDON TOWN FOOTBALL CLUB VISIT

Today, I went to the Swindon Town Football Club and I had a great time there. It is the second time I have been to the Football Club, as I went there last summer. I had a great tour of the stadium such as: the meeting and conference rooms, the shower, gym and changing rooms and the exterior of the Stadium.

One of my favourite rooms at the Football Club is the gym room. This is because I like being fit and my favourite part of the gym is the treadmill. The treadmill is my favourite piece of sport technology in the gym room because I like to keep my legs running and the more I run, the greater speed I can get.



Outside was nice because I managed to get some fresh air and liked seeing what the football players do when they come out before their matches. Also I like the seats because people can watch the match from above and when I want to watch a match, I would go to the top because I can see the top of the stadium.

Swindon Town Football Club is one of the best places to go in Swindon and next time I go there, I would like to watch the team win a match, so Swindon can take home a trophy.

Freddie, Year 10

Year 7 Boys Rugby

The Year 7 rugby team have taken part in their first fixtures this term in the form of three multi team tournaments. Due to only having one mini bus and a squad of over twenty keen and eager Year 7s, we decided to split our players over the three tournaments to make sure everyone played at least one tournament.

The teams played really well and won many admirers with the way they play the game both in style (running and passing rugby mixed with brave tackling) and the enjoyment and enthusiasm they showed whilst there both on and off the pitch.

The Swindon rugby club event saw notable performances from Chris Barrett and Leo Masi. The LPA tournament saw two outstanding winger tries from the speedy George Aldred. Last but not least the Supermarine tournament saw the try of the tournament from James Netter and best tackling again from Leo Masi.

Well done. Can't wait to see these player back next year.

Swindon Schools Cross Country



The PE department would like to congratulate every student involved in the Swindon Schools Cross-Country at Nova Hreed on Saturday 12th November 2016.

Excellent times and places were achieved throughout the day by all who ran. All students who achieved a top 12 position are eligible for selection for the Swindon cross country team. Selection details will be passed on once received. Good luck to those taking part!

Year 9 Swindon Rugby Champions!

On 23rd November, we dared to be bold and entered our relatively inexperienced Yr 9 Rugby team into the Swindon Schools One Day Tournament.

Nearly all secondary schools were there – so the competition was split into four pools. The boys quickly got into their stride, and showed physicality in both defence and attack, to finish the top of their pool without conceding any tries. We went on to the knockout stages, and by this time the team was now both cohesive and producing even better rugby, with everybody coming to terms with their own positions.

We were dominant at the set-piece, the scrum working particularly well, and our abrasive running and sound defence got us through to the first and second place final.

We got off to a fantastic start, against a bigger and organised LPA side, and scored inside the first minute. This proved to be paramount to our success because LPA managed an equaliser within minutes, and then spent the rest of the game attacking us wave after wave, coming within inches of our line. However, the boys were resolute in defence and were determined not to concede – so after a hard fought battle the score at full time was 5 a-piece.

Before the 'sudden death' extra-time commenced, we spoke about how well we had done, as the tournament's rookies, and how the next few minutes would define us as a team. The boys took to the pitch fully fired up and gained possession at the restart; and, after a succession of quick-fire passes, it was befitting that our Captain, Matteo, touched down to claim first place with a superb, bulldozing, individual effort.

WELL DONETO ALL CONCERNED!

Noteworthy performances came from our wrecking-ball, Matteo; our incisive, elusive runner, Kester; and our whole team defensive effort – only conceding one try throughout the event!



A Strong Start to the Season



The Year 7 Netball team have had two fixtures so far this season. The first St Joseph's victory was on Wednesday 12th October 2016 against Swindon Academy. The score was 11-0 and the player of the match was Jessica.

The second fixture on Wednesday 9th November was against Nova Hreod. Some excellent netball was played and the resulting score was 2-2. The St Joseph's Sports Captain, Neve, commented on the fixture stating that, "We all tried our hardest throughout the whole match. We need to improve calling for the ball when we are in space.

Nova Hreod nominated our player of the match as our Goal Defence (GD) which was Jennaya."

The team for both fixtures included the following players: Kiana, Jessica, Neve, Klara, Kaycy, Jennaya, Tyra.

NETBALL

Dorcan Defeated



On Wednesday 16th November, the Year 8 Netball team from St Joseph's went head to head with the Dorcan Academy netball team.

The whistle blew and then the game started. While the centre court players were sprinting into the centre third, Lexie Moore (C) held the ball and threw a rapid pass to Jess De Mello (GA). GA then passed the ball to Lorna (WA) who passed the ball to Jess (GS). From this quick and efficient attack, the St Joseph's team held an opportunistic space in the D. The GS missed, however the GA was quick to catch the rebound and score, which made the score 1-0 to St Joseph's.

For the second centre pass, Dorcan had possession. However, St Joseph's intercepted the ball through some excellent defending by Julia (GD). From this interception GD did a brilliant chest pass and Mia (WD) who caught the ball. From here WD and WA used the space on the court well to move the ball down court which lead to a goal being

scored by GS. Mia threw the ball to Lorna who performed a shoulder pass which Jess B caught and scored.

The second half started with Dorcan's centre pass. The Dorcan C and GA worked well to get the ball into their D. However after some excellent marking by Chantelle (GK) she intercepted the ball.

After some excellent play from both teams, St Joseph's won overall 10-1. Dorcan awarded player of the match to Mia Grace.

A huge congratulations to the Year 7 Netball team from St Joseph's who drew against Dorcan with a final score of (2-2). The Year 7 player of the match, awarded by Dorcan, was Jessica (7E). The team included the following players; Kiana (GS) and Jessica (GA).

Report written by Chantelle (8B).



A very happy and holy Christmas from all at St. Joseph's

In the face of the little Jesus we contemplate the face of God, who does not reveal himself in strength and power but in the weakness and frailty of a new born babe.

This is what our God is like, he comes so close, in a child. This child reveals the faithfulness and tenderness of the unconditional love of God around each one of us.

That is why we celebrate at Christmas, thus reliving what the shepherds at Bethlehem experienced.

Pope Francis