



ST. JOSEPH'S NEWS

December 2013 Issue 21

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My second term as Principal has given me the opportunity to get to know more about the most important part of the College: the people. A community is so much more than a building, it is all about people. Our staff, governors and, above all, our students make St. Joseph's such a great place.

We had been working very hard since September in preparation for our Ofsted monitoring visit and when it came in November we were pleased that the inspection went well. The lead inspector judged our plan 'fit for purpose' and we now know we are on the right path to move the College forward. You can view the report on our website.

Now Advent is upon us and, as a Catholic College, we know that this time of preparation is more than the commercial pressure leading up to Christmas. Jesus Christ came into the world to reveal to us how much God loves us. I hope that we as a College community move towards Christmas with the desire to be open to God.

I hope that everyone associated with the College has a happy and holy Christmas.

Paul Hughes, Principal

Enjoying 'Joseph'

This year St. Joseph's put on a performance of *Joseph and his Technicolor Dreamcoat*. The rehearsals started in September, so we had plenty of time to rehearse (and we think it definitely showed!)

The whole cast put on an amazing show, from good-old Joseph and his fabulous coat, to our incredible choir. And not forgetting the narrators - the brothers, Jacob, wives and EVERYONE who made this such a breathtaking show. It's been hard work but also an amazing experience for all and that was due to all the people involved from the teachers to the whole cast; everybody gave 100% throughout all the rehearsals and performances.

We all hope that next year's show will be just as excellent and we hope you enjoyed it if you came to see it. If you would like to be in next year's show please speak to Mr English or Miss Collins.

Jarlath Lawrence, Niamh Smith, Lucy Brown and Hannah Burston



Dates for your diary

6th January	College re-opens
16th January	Rock School Concert, 7.30pm
20th January	Year 11 reviews on E-portal
23rd January	Academic Tutoring Day
28th January	Year 10 Parents' Evening (ABLM), 5.30pm
5th February	Year 10 Parents' Evening (CESW), 5.30pm
11th February	Performing Arts Festival, 7pm
13th February	Year 9 Transition Pathway, 6pm

Last day of term

Students will finish College at 12.55pm on the last day of term (20th December). Students will be unable to remain in College unless arrangements have already been made.

Please can parents and carers remember that, unless prior agreement has been obtained, collection by car within the College grounds is not permitted at the end of the College day. The collection point is Tesco's on Ocotol Way.

After College Sports Clubs 2014

Tuesday

Mixed Basketball (KS4 & KS5), 3– 4pm, Sports Hall

GCSE Revision, 3– 4pm, S02

Wednesday

Mixed Hockey, 3– 4pm, Astro Turf

Girls Football, 3 – 4pm, Astro Turf

Year 11 Boys Football, 3 – 4pm, Field

Year 9 Badminton, 3 – 4pm, Sports Hall

Thursday

Mixed Basketball (KS3), 3 – 4pm, Sports Hall

Change of Address or Phone Number

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

Whole College Mass

On Friday the 4th October the entire College community came together for the first time to celebrate the start of the new academic year with a mass. Previous 'whole-College masses have taken place in the summer term, when Years 11, 12 and 13 have completed their exams. This year Mr Hughes felt that it was important that the entire college community had a shared spiritual focus for the start of the year.

Canon John led the service that saw over a thousand students worship together. Students from Years 7 to 11 contributed to the readings, the offertory, the alter serving and the music. The College choir played an outstanding role in ensuring that the entire College Street was filled with the joyful sounds of a community singing in praise of Christ.

Literally a great success

This year's Swindon Youth Festival of Literature was a great success, with students from the College participating in a wide selection of events; meeting authors, listening to them talk about their craft and asking questions; and taking part in quizzes, writing and illustration competitions.

"On Monday 11th November, six students from St Joseph's (including me) set out for Dorcan Academy for the Swindon Youth Festival of Literature Inter-School Book Quiz. The quiz, we learned, would consist of twelve rounds, with a further bonus round in the second half.

The first six rounds were exciting and my team had pulled ahead. After a short break, and a few minutes silence (for of course it was Remembrance Day), we leapt into Part Two of the quiz. During a minute of nail-biting tension the points were added up... and the screen turned off. After an agonising wait, the screen flickered back on to reveal a horrifying result: we had lost. By twenty points! That was a strange occurrence for a team who were ahead a few seconds ago. In fact, it was impossible. Confused, I looked to see who the winners were and was instantly delighted.

They had changed the order to put the winners first and right at the top was St Joseph's! Giddy with glee, my team stepped up to claim the trophy."

Joel Kavanagh, part of the winning St. Joseph's team



Years 7, 8 and 9 students Anna Barrett, Joel Kavanagh, Olek Young, Benny George, Winsome Wong and Clare Bartoszewska collecting their trophy after winning the Inter-School Book Quiz.

As well as the Book Quiz Team's resounding success, St. Joseph's also had two other prize winners from this year's Youth Festival of Literature - Sasha Brady was awarded second prize in the Short Story Competition and Lola Funsho also came second in the Illustration Competition. Well done to all involved.

"I attended a presentation at Swindon Central Library for achieving second place in the Short Story Competition, as part of the Swindon Youth Festival of Literature. The competition was between eleven different schools in Swindon with two age categories. The mayor was there to present the prizes."

Sasha Brady

Governors' Update

Following OFSTED's report, the Governors moved quickly to comply with the requirement that an Interim Executive Board (IEB) be set up to oversee the required improvements in teaching and learning.

Along with external educational experts two governors have joined the IEB with one of them, Reverend Terry Aspell, elected as Chair. Terry says of his new post:

"As a former pupil of St. Joseph's my vision as Chair of the recently formed IEB is to assist the College to regain the excellent reputation that St. Joseph's has held for many years throughout Swindon and beyond, and ensure that future OFSTED inspections will again rate the College as 'outstanding'. I am delighted with the team we have on the IEB, especially with the educational expertise that both Dave Dawson and Aidan Farrell bring, as well as the business experience that Lucy Skittrall and I can add to the board."

As the Board of Governors, we believe that this team is well equipped to give Paul Hughes the support he needs to move the College forward and we all look forward to working with him, and the rest of the College's Leadership Team, to achieve this.

In the meantime the main governing body have been carrying on with those tasks that lie outside the remit of the IEB. A lot of time is spent monitoring the performance of the College and the Senior Leadership Team. Monitoring is done through receiving reports containing agreed measures and questioning the Principal and the Leadership Team on any issues that are detected. The phrase generally used is that of 'the critical friend'. This means that the governors can praise the Principal and their staff and also challenge them to do better. There is a clear distinction between the management team who operate the College and the governors, who review the management team's performance as well as authorise the strategic direction of the College.

Finance

One of the most importance aspects of the College is monitoring its operating budget. Governors on the Finance Committee have a duty to make decisions when demand exceeds budget and a priority has to be set. In November governors received the auditor's report, which is completed in much the same way as any company, and included the year end budget and out turn report for last year. It also reviewed the financial procedures manual and the progress being made in several claims the College is making for building defects. The audit report is available on the College website.

Students and Staff

In November, the governors on the Staff and Students Committee reviewed the report giving a clear picture of trends, responses and outcomes in behaviour, attendance and safeguarding. The Governors spent time looking at pupils' attitudes to learning and conduct in lessons; students' behaviour towards, and respect for, other young

people and adults, including freedom from bullying and harassment; and students' attendance and punctuality at College. A review of how well teachers manage the behaviour and expectations of students was also carried out.

Governors also reviewed staff movements and turnover and this term took the chance to review the current situation on staff pensions and the College pay policy. The governors look closely at the reasons why staff leave so as to ensure that the majority of reasons are 'good' reasons such as family moves, maternity leave and promotion.

College Policies

The Governors also spent time reviewing and approving College policies in the areas of Attendance, Behaviour, Uniform and Admissions to ensure that the College is meeting its statutory requirements. This policy on Admissions is a very important legal document and directs the work of the Admission panel. As St. Joseph's is consistently oversubscribed, governors have been meeting regularly on the admissions panel this term to consider appeals.

Other Governing Duties

This term several events have taken place. A governor has been sitting alongside the senior management team carrying out a detailed review of the College Improvement Plan. In the same way, a governor with expertise in Human Resources has participated in Performance Management Process consultation sessions with members of staff who are managers. A performance management process is a key requirement for the College to have in place and reflects a major change in Government policy on teachers pay and conditions.

Two Governors have spent a morning in College talking to Sixth Formers. This was an evidence gathering exercise to seed future strategic discussion on the type of Sixth Form we need at St. Joseph's, as Government educational policy changes over the coming years. Some governors have been in attendance at the two parents forums held recently and one governor who has responsibility for SEN provision has met with staff working this area. Governors have also been taking part in recruitment interviews for new staff and for signing off authorization forms for College trips.

We hope this offers you an insight into the work and progress currently being made and we will continue to update you with developments.

David Bason & Rob Collins

Stop press...

Following the resignation of Stephen Lake, the Full Governing Body have elected Canon John Cunningham as Chair. He will take up the post in January. We welcome Canon John in his new role and in the very active part he continues to play at St. Joseph's.

Wedding Bells in RE



Year 7 Roman Villa Competition

This term Year 7 students have been learning about the Romans. As part of their work they have been busy creating Roman Villas using recycled materials. Well done to all of them. Winners will be announced very soon!



"The Roman Villa project was great fun. Some of the end results were amazing. We included a hypocaust, which is a Roman central heating system and a courtyard. We used many skills such as teamwork, independent enquiry and creative thinking."

Joseph Morse & Louis Skeates

Food Technology

Thank you to all the parents that have provided ingredients for their son and/or daughter, we have had a very successful term. Please can I remind parents that students will require a container to take their food home in.

Flexible Pathway – problem solving

At the start of this year the Flexible Pathway class started exploring the key skill of problem solving. Problem solving is all about trying to solve a problem within a specific amount of time.

The problem the class had was to raise money for CAFOD. Everyone was given a £10 investment from CAFOD and we had to go away and make a profit from that £10. In the class we had different ideas on how to raise money. Some of our ideas included a doughnut sale, win a Swindon Town football, car washing, henna tattoos and cake sales.

After all the fundraising the class had raised over £200 for CAFOD. With £200 CAFOD can get a gift such as a bee keeping kit or a cow for a family. We all really enjoyed the experience of making money for CAFOD and would like to say a big thank you to CAFOD for letting us take part in this challenge.



Visting the Victoria and Albert Museum and the National Portrait Gallery

The ADT Department took nearly a hundred students to the V&A and the National Portrait Gallery on Friday 29th November. Textile and Art Students were able to take photographs and make sketches to inspire their coursework projects.

Year 10 Art students were impressed with the Jewellery and Theatre Design areas and Textile students were able to focus on Geometric Design for their current project.

For many of the students it was an experience just to be in London as well as having the privilege to see some famous and inspirational Art and Design from around the world.

As ever their behaviour was exemplary and we hope the trip will truly inspire and further their GCSE work.

Christmas Appeal

The Christmas Box Appeal has been a huge success this year and we would like to thank everyone for their contributions. A special thank you to all of the Year 13 students who have spent time advertising and promoting the appeal, wrapping boxes, sorting items and filling over 50 boxes to be delivered before the end of term. We have received more 'new' items than ever before and we thank all those who have contributed, particularly 7M who have been extremely generous and 9M who gift wrapped their items. House points have been given to all tutor groups who contributed. Thank you to all who have supported the appeal.

Swindon Schools Cross-Country Championships

On Saturday 16th November we set off at 8.30am on a very cold autumn morning for the Swindon Schools Cross-Country Championships at Nova Hreod School.

As usual the ground under foot was very soft and, coupled with the icy air, made the demanding course even more challenging.

All students gave their best but the most noteworthy performances came from Rajendra Limbu (7S), who finished 1st overall in the Year 7 boys race, and Erin Robinson (7L) who was placed 12th in the Year 7 girls event.

Both of these students go on to represent Swindon at the Regional Championships – we wish them the very best of luck.

Well done to the whole squad.

Football Success

Karolayne and Kayane Byrom are having an excellent football season.

Both girls have been selected to play for the U16 Wiltshire team with Karolyane also being selected to attend the English Schools FA U15 Girls squad training sessions.

A fantastic achievement!

Year 8 Netball

On Wednesday 4th December the Year 8 netball team: Keisha Ishani, Georgina Muroki, Taania Saeed, Nina Gomez, Oshin Raposo, Angel Duffield, Rachel Fillipa and Safah Lone played a fantastic game against Royal Wotton Bassett. It was a very tough game with every quarter ending in a draw; making it anyone's game. We made them work very hard and ensured we remained focused. We were positive we could get a good result with great team work and consistent play. The final score was 11-11. A huge well done girls!

Marathon at St. Brendan's Sixth Form College

It was around 8:15 am when we had set off for the marathon. We were eagerly anticipating the event and how many different people we were going to meet.

On arrival the weather was decidedly chilly so we went inside almost immediately, in order to enter the competition for CAFOD. Back outside we went straight to the centre of the course, where a member of the committee told us to warm up and stretch so we wouldn't injure ourselves.

When the race started I was feeling very confident but still nervous, due to the fact that I didn't know the people competing and that they could be incredibly formidable opponents. As we started my nerves died away because I was treated with kindness and respect by my opponents. Halfway round the course I found I couldn't run, as it became difficult to move on. Luckily my friends caught up to me and encouraged me to move on and keep going.

Another memory that stayed with me was a 4 year old child who cheered me on to catch up to the leader, which motivated me more than anything else that day.

It was an extremely enjoyable experience, which not only lets you help people that are less fortunate than you but also let me discover talents hidden within me. Mostly it showed me how friendship can be really important in everything you do in life - even when you think you can't. do something together we can achieve more!

Raul Vital, Michael Farah and Uran Dias



As part of the GCSE RE course, Year 11 students learn about the importance of the sacrament of marriage. Again this year, our students planned and prepared a Catholic wedding ceremony with hymns, readings and even a reception. We have been amazed by the talents of our GCSE students, including singing, photography and baking skills. Some fabulous wedding cakes were made by the students.

The RE department would like to take this opportunity to thank our Year 11 students for their commitment and enthusiasm in ensuring that our weddings were a success. God bless and merry Christmas from the RE department.

"We had a wedding to demonstrate a typical Catholic ceremony within a church, as part of our GCSEs. I was the groom and I said all the typical lines and vows that are read to show commitment in a wedding ceremony. I thought it went well and everyone made an effort to look their best by dressing up. At the end of the ceremony we had a wedding reception and some of our classmates made cakes, cupcakes and cookies to celebrate. The cake was really nice! Overall, I thought this activity was a good way to show what happens in a real wedding ceremony and a different way of learning that, for me, is very effective as this is something that I won't forget."

Michael Prinzi

"During November the College chapel became a place of peace and solemnity. The chapel was the venue for a series of glamorous pseudo-weddings. The mood was extremely positive in all of these events. And, though there were many cases of stifled laughter and minor giggling, the weddings were conducted in a deeply spiritual and respectful fashion. Most people were well-dressed for the occasion, with clothing ranging from formal suits and ties to elegant dresses. Afterwards, cake was served and people returned to their classes feeling suitably refreshed and upbeat. Overall, the events were highly entertaining and it was a hugely enjoyable experience."

Shane Halliwell

Applying to Sixth Form for 2014

Year 11 students are reminded to get their application for Sixth Form in by Christmas. Interviews will take place in the New Year. Also, congratulations to Daryl Rego from 11E for winning the iPad, given away in the Prize Draw as part of the Sixth Form Open Evening.



Being interviewed for Oxford

Many, many congratulations to Dale Nunes and Daniel Bright who have been called for interview at Oxford University. Both students have put an enormous amount of study and preparation into their university applications and have succeeded in very competitive fields (Dale with Medicine and Daniel with Chemistry), making it into the very arduous interview rounds. Both students will be spending over two days being interviewed by academics at Oxford. Please join us in wishing them both the best of luck.



Dan and Dale with Mr Hughes at the Sixth Form Awards Evening



Taking to the stage at the Wyvern

Elizabeth Webb recently took part in the SALOS production of Sweeney Todd at the Wyvern Theatre, alongside Henry Firth in Year 10. Elizabeth played one of the main parts, Joanna, and her vocal skills were amazing throughout the performances. A big 'well done' to Elizabeth and many thanks to all students and staff who went along to watch and support her.

Having a ball at the ATP World Tour Finals



One of our Sixth Form students, Emma Hancock, has returned to College after a truly amazing couple of weeks, being a ball girl at the ATP World Tour Finals at the O2 Arena in London. Year 12 student Emma took part in a gruelling series of trials, beating 3000 people from across the country to be selected for one of 30 ball girl and boy places at the Finals. She met players including Novak Djokovic, Rafa Nadal and Roger Federer and was one of the two teams selected to take part in the final match, where she saw Djokovic triumph and got to meet all the players afterwards. Congratulations on an amazing achievement; truly a 'once in a lifetime' experience.

Branching out with the Duke of Edinburgh Award

Expeditions form a key part of the Duke of Edinburgh Award, alongside the physical, skill and volunteering parts of the scheme. Here are two examples of what students have chosen to do for the volunteering section of the award, learning new skills and developing talents.



Sharon and Alberta on their recent Duke Of Edinburgh Award expedition

Volunteering in the First Youth Centre

"I started volunteering in the youth centre at Oakfield Campus in June this year. I go every week, helping the youth workers and volunteers. In every session we have art and crafts, games in the hall and cooking in the kitchen, so that all the young people can get involved in different activities.

Working in the youth group means I have been able to develop better communication skills with people of all ages. You are always expected to interact safely with the youths and the only challenge in working there is that you are expected to remain professional at all time. This can be difficult for me, as some of the youths there are only one year younger than me and at times I've found it hard to tell them off when they do something that is unacceptable.

Overall I have gained more confidence in myself and I have met new people that I would never have met if it was not for the Duke of Edinburgh Award. Doing the award may seem to be hard but it is fun."

Sharon Njoroge

... and the National Trust

"The National Trust is a charity founded over 100 years ago. They preserve outdoors spaces, preventing them from being built up, and don't only take care of opens spaces and historical places but also of the environment, food, farming, transport and heritage. They gave me a great opportunity to start volunteering for them, starting in 2013."

I help the Media Department by editing videos that will be published on their YouTube channel. My job is to watch all the clips that experts have taken for the charity, choosing

the best bit to create one video, usually of one or two minutes. I also need to find suitable music, adapt the light, colours and choose a title that will be eye-catching.

I also had the opportunity to listen to some meetings that the Media Department has and it's amazing to know the projects that are taking place and their aims for the future of the charity.

I really enjoy volunteering for the National Trust because I had the opportunity to learn new skills and meet new people who have a passion for what they are doing. This experience has given me an idea of what could be like to work for a big company such as the National Trust and the challenges that a charity faces. I wouldn't have volunteered if I hadn't chosen to take part in the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme."

Alberta Osei Antwi

Congratulations on completing the Gold Final Expedition

Congratulations go to the Gold Teams who completed their expedition despite floods, torrential rain and strong winds. Read about their experience below.

Batling the elements during our Final Expedition

"The Final Expedition took place in the Lake District. We were fortunate that we were sleeping in a hostel for the first night so that we could prepare ourselves for the days that were almost upon us.

On our first day walking the weather conditions were appalling with torrential rain, a deeply bitter cold and heavy wind speeds; the weather was truly unforgiving. This didn't improve throughout the expedition. However, we pushed through of all of these conditions and finally saw the beautiful sight that was our camp.

We survived our two days of wild camping with no human facilities of any kind; you really start to appreciate the little things, like trees! There was occasional sunshine though and, when there was, the scenery was beautiful.

As the days went on the amount of walking was taking its toll on our feet, knees and backs. All we had in mind was reaching our final campsite, setting up our nice dry tents, eating our hot dinners, going to bed in the knowledge that we were kind of clean (from a shower we had been allowed to have at last!) and that we would soon be home."

Jamie Munday

Prayer

Dear Jesus,

As we prepare to celebrate the gift of yourself to our world, we pray for our family and friends, and we are reminded of what you said, that there is more joy in giving than receiving.

We also remember those who are in difficulty during this season of giving and pray that your love will give them courage and hope.

We ask you to bless us and those we love. Amen.

House News

All the Houses have had many reasons to celebrate this term, with students taking part in a wide range of activities, gaining house points in the process. Everyone is very proud of all those who took part in this year's brilliant College production, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat*, which was a great success and enjoyed by all who participated and attended. Students who made pieces in Art Club saw their efforts used in the performance and the talent on show from all the houses, singing, dancing and acting, was uplifting.

Success was seen in many activities, including Giorgia Wyatt (Buckfast) achieving a place at the National Finals of Irish Dancing - we wish you every success. Darius Minchenzi (Glastonbury) recently achieved his red belt in taekwondo and Jordan Serratore (Glastonbury) should be applauded for receiving his third degree black belt, a testament to what can be achieved when talent mixes with hard work and dedication. Meanwhile, Maximo Lopez (Glastonbury) should be applauded for his musical achievements. The Marlow Music Festival is an extremely competitive event and Maximo recently won two silver medals!

Congratulations also to Joel Kavanagh (Buckfast), Anna Barrett (Evesham), Winsome Wong and Sasha Brady (Glastonbury), who were all part of the victorious Book Quiz Team 2013 in the Swindon Youth Festival of Literature. In addition, congratulations to Lola Funsho (Glastonbury) who came first in the Swindon Youth Festival of Literature

Illustration Competition. See details of the event, and the many successes for St. Joseph's, earlier in this newsletter.

Before Christmas we look forward to what looks sure to be another exciting Charity Week. This year the Houses will be fundraising for Jubilee Gardens, Prospect Hospice, Swindon Young Carers and The Harbour Project. The Houses will be competing against each other to raise the most money for their chosen charities and their success has already been demonstrated this term by the generous contributions brought in for the Christmas Shoebox Appeal. Students were outstandingly generous, contributing many full boxes to lift the spirits of those less privileged on Christmas day. Their touching gifts gained many house points and saw the competition hot up for the Christmas Cup, with Evesham in the lead at the moment of writing.

Students in Walsingham have also been busy with the impending re-launch of Student Voice in the College. The House has been on the hunt for a House Captain, Deputy Captain and Assistant Captain. As a team, these representatives will help to deliver charity fundraisers, House events, assemblies and collective worship, as well as providing a voice for the students of the College in parliament meetings. Students made some excellent, articulate applications and they will be announcing their new representatives at the end of term. Such was the strength of applications that all received House Points for their efforts.

