



As the academic year reaches its midpoint, we have an ideal opportunity to reflect on the progress made by our students.

On Thursday 24th January we held our Academic Tutoring Day. This opportunity to review students' progress across all of their subjects was well attended. Feedback from parents of Year 7 was gratefully received by the College indicating both parents and children are happy with their first experiences of St. Joseph's with 100 % stating that they felt that their children were well looked after, well taught and encouraged to achieve their best.

College attendance figures also give us a reason to be positive, with average for students in Years 7-11 at 96%. As adverse weather conditions and flu are not yet behind us, we would urge every student to make it in to College to learn despite these seasonal challenges.

Another major indicator of the progress being made by students this year came from exam results of our Year 11 students who took early entries for their English and Mathematics GCSE's, with 75% achieving a grade C or above. These early entries are part of the College's strategy to ensure that as many students as possible achieve a strong pass grade in Mathematics and English. Congratulations to all the students who achieved the grade they were striving for. Those who were not successful this time will get support to prepare for another opportunity to gain these vital pass grades in the summer.

The positive feedback from students and parents, combined with the high attendance figures and the examination success achieved by many students, indicate that this is going to be a happy and productive year at St. Joseph's. With your continued support we look forward to an even more successful second half to the year.

Prayer for Education Sunday

God of all grace and compassion,
whose ways are perfect,
whose words give us life,
whose love seeks to draw us together in harmony to
build your heavenly kingdom;

May we walk in truth and grace day by day
in our teaching and learning
in our living in community
in the building up of one another.
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

St. Josephs Primary school Presentation and Consultation evening

On February 28th, between 6.30 – 8.00pm, the College will be holding an open evening to outline the plans for the new primary school, and answer any questions you may have about the project. The school is due to open in September 2014. Open to everyone, the evening gives you the opportunity to see the plans and proposals for the new school. The College Leadership Group, Governors, architects and project team will also be there to answer your questions.

There will be parking on-site and refreshments available throughout the evening. We look forward to seeing you there.

Admissions Information

St Joseph's Catholic College is currently consulting on a revised admissions policy for 2014. The Admissions Policy now includes the primary school as well as the secondary school. The Admission Policy is available via the College website on <http://www.stjosephs.swindon.sch.uk>.

If you have any feedback on the draft policy please contact Michelle Ferris on 01793 714204 or mferris@stjosephs.swindon.sch.uk.

Applying to Sixth Form

Did you know that in 2012 our Sixth Formers achieved a 99% A Level pass rate? Or that we offer a great range of A and AS Levels, Level 2 and BTEC options for those who choose to stay on post sixteen? In 2012, 51% of our students went on to university (22% to Russell Group institutions) and all our leavers went on to higher or further education, apprenticeships, work or a gap year. We also offer a wide range of enrichment activities and excellent support throughout your time in Sixth Form.

Applications are still being accepted for post-sixteen courses. You can download our application form from our website (www.stjosephs.swindon.sch.uk) and find all information on the options available and enrichment activities too.

"I was very close to attending another local college but am glad that I decided to stay on at St. Joseph's. I love my courses, my social group and how the students in Years 12 and 13 are cared for by Mr Blake, Miss Foley and Mrs Carter. I definitely made the right decision when I chose to stay on."
Current Year 13 student

Dates for your diary

w/c 11th February	Half Term
18th February	College reopens
18th February	Parenting Teenagers Course, 7 pm
21st February	Year 9 Parents' Evening (ABLM)
25th February	Parenting Teenagers Course, 7 pm
26th February	Year 9 Parents' Evening (CESW)
4th March	Parenting Teenagers Course, 7 pm
7th March	Staff Training Day
11th March	Parenting Teenagers Course, 7 pm
12th March	Year 10 Parents' Evening (ABLM)
14th & 15th March	College Production, Seussical, 7.30 pm
18th March	Parenting Teenagers Course, 7 pm
20th March	Year 10 Parents' Evening (CESW)

Coming soon! Seussical, the musical



This year's College production of Seussical will be performed on the 14th and 15th March in the Main Hall. Come and enjoy this magical portrayal of the famous Dr. Seuss books, suitable for all the family.

Tickets are available from the College Reception, £4 concessions, £5 adults.

Music by Stephen Flaherty, lyrics by Lynn Ahrens, book by Lynn Ahrens and Stephen Flaherty, co-conceived by Eric Idle, based on the works of Dr. Seuss.

Youth Ministry to Lourdes 2013

Are you aged 16-25 in August 2013? If so you can join the Clifton Youth Ministry team on their pilgrimage to Lourdes.

The trip is from August 22nd – 31st and costs £450 including all accommodation and travel. For full details go to www.cliftondiocese.com/youthministry.

Parenting Teenagers Course

Would you like some down-to-earth and sensitive help on how to build a great relationship with your teenager? In partnership with St. Joseph's, the Swindon Catholic Deanery is offering a new course designed to explore issues around parenting teenagers.

Held in the main hall at St. Joseph's, parents, step-parents, or prospective parents or carers of children aged 11 – 18 years are all welcome. It is also open to those with younger children who wish to prepare for the teenage years. Childcare will be provided free on site for those who need it.

There will be five sessions, each running from 7.00 – 9.30 pm (doors open at 6.30 pm). The topics and dates are:

- Building strong foundations, 18th February
- Meeting our children's needs, 25th February
- Setting boundaries, 4th March
- Teaching healthy relationships, 11th March
- Our long term aim, 18th March

There is no charge for the course, donations will be accepted.

Please enrol in advance by either completing the online form at the Swindon Catholic Deanery website or fill in a paper form and post or hand it to reception at St. Joseph's Catholic College (marked for the attention of Mrs Ruth Chivers, Parental Support Advisor). Paper forms are available in each of the Swindon Catholic churches or to download from the Catholic Deanery website.



Swindon Schools' 5 a side Football

The Swindon Schools' 5 a side Football competitions take place every winter with separate events for Years 7, 8 and 9. The preliminary rounds take place at Ridgeway, Nova Hreod and St. Joseph's, with the finals at St. Joseph's.

In the Year 8 qualifying round at St. Joseph's the home team played very well and were unbeaten in their three matches. They drew with Churchfields in the first match and also Kingsdown in the second, and beat Warneford in their final game. Unfortunately for St. Joseph's they were pushed into second place when Kingsdown beat Churchfields, giving them two wins and one draw. Kingsdown play in the finals at St. Joseph's on 6th February. Hopefully, the St. Joseph's Year 9 team may also be in the finals as they play their qualifying round on 30th January. Good luck!

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.

Reading in Curriculum Support

I think Reading Group is a very helpful lesson for students who maybe are not very confident at reading (or just need a little boost) because Mrs. Dooley, our teacher, can help us to get even better at reading. It is fun and enjoyable which makes it better.

After starting Reading Group, I think I have improved my reading and I feel more confident now. In the lesson we do all kind of things like comprehension, spellings, games and reading. Comprehension is really good because after we have read a book our teacher checks that we have understood it by asking us questions and getting us to do blank word activities, which is really fun.

Jay Lalli

Rock School Concert

On Thursday 17th January students and parents braved the snow to attend a concert given by the bands of Rock School.

There were four bands taking part, each performing a selection of songs. The bands ranged from our new Year 7 bands to the more experienced Year 10 groups. The evening was a chance for the students to display their Rock Band skills and the audience were treated to some excellent musicianship.

The bands regularly perform at the gigs organised by the Swindon Rock School (Swindon Music Service) so watch this space for details about their next event.

Maths Challenges

The results are in for the first of the individual Maths Challenges for this year. The Senior Challenge is open to Years 11-13 and is the hardest of the three, as you would expect! Adam Davies was the best in College with a silver certificate, and bronze certificates were awarded to Ryan Perkins, Nigel da Cruz, William Ford, Dale Nunes, Tess Pringle and Naomi South. Adam and Dale also made up half of the team for the Senior Team Challenge, along with Salik Ahmed and Preethva Burman, who competed against 20 other schools from the South West.

The Junior Team Challenge takes place in April for Years 8 and 9, and the Year 7 challenge at the end of February. If you are in Set 1 and would like to take part, please speak to your Maths Teacher.

Oxford University with Villiers Park

On Tuesday 15th, we went on a trip to Merton College in Oxford with Villiers Park. We had the opportunity to participate in an Ancient Greek lecture, where we found out how to write our name in Ancient Greek and how much our name is 'worth' in their number system. We also learnt about Oxford University itself and how to get in, including details about a summer school. After a delicious lunch, we got to have a tour around the college and learn about its facilities and student life from two second year students. Overall, it was a fascinating and beneficial experience.

Lee-ann Popowicz and Laura Daley

The Silent Monks' Halleluia Chorus

Last term 8L performed the Silent Monks' Halleluia Chorus in front of Glastonbury House. The whole tutor group stood up on the stage and, without singing a word, raised and lowered parts of words in time with the music. It was really good to do something together as a tutor group and I think everyone enjoyed our performance. We practised a few times in tutorial and in citizenship, with Mr Davies conducting us. A couple of people couldn't join in, which was a bit of a shame. However, I think all of us who did, loved the experience as it was quite different to anything we had done before. Also, it didn't take too long to prepare as we got the hang of it quite easily, especially as Mr Davies was an expert.

Kieran Sardo and Steffanie Vitale-Richardson

Raising funds for El Salvador

A team of volunteers, including students from our College, will be going to Arcatao near Chalatenango in El Salvador during the summer break. We have been asked to help the Arcatao Christian community build a chapel, in memory of those who died in the Civil War. Travelling for three weeks, the Outreach Group will have to raise money for all expenses plus £5000 for the building project itself. The students involved will be organising various fundraising activities so please support them in this very worthwhile cause.



Kintbury

We had a wonderful day at Kintbury, the best bit of the day was the reflection at the end because it made us think about how we behave as people. We did a session called Our Life Journey which was very special as it gave us time to reflect on how we are and how we could improve ourselves. We would tell next year's Year 7 to go and enjoy it.

Ellie Boulden and Charlotte Mills

House News

Buckfast

Congratulations to Buckfast House who won the Christmas Cup. Students received a non-uniform day after the Christmas break in recognition of all of their hard work.

During Charity Week, Year 11 were instrumental in ensuring a Buckfast victory. Almost all of the students in 10A were involved with different charity events and showing real enthusiasm and support for the charity, Swindon Children Without a Diagnosis. Students in 11S sold delicious hot chocolate in the street with a variety of scrumptious toppings. Year 11 leave a wonderful legacy.

Students in 10A sold chocolate covered cakes and brave volunteers from 10S, Dylan and Charlie and Mr Foster, were sponsored to have their legs waxed.

9A created a buzz around the College with their fantastic 'gunge a teacher' event. Many thanks to Mr Stoten, Mr Johns, Mr Kasperczak and especially to Mr Rutter for supporting this. Students in 9S baked cakes in College Tuesday evening and sold these in the street.

Students from 8S ran a variety of stalls in a summer fair style, including guess the name of the teddy and a human fruit machine. 8A ran a tuck shop, tombola and Macauley successfully completed a sponsored silence for the day.

7S's much anticipated Fair Trade Fashion Show was a huge success, with staff and students modelling recycled clothes tailored by students in 7S during the House Day. We look forward to supporting 7A in their attempt to break a world record later in the year.

Thank you to all students and staff in Buckfast House. This year saw more students than ever getting involved and making a fantastic effort for a really worthwhile cause.

Glastonbury

A big well done to all Glastonbury students who raised a massive £286 for our House charity, Swindon Foodbank, in December. Pupils planned a range of exciting fundraising activities that thrilled the College. This money will be a massive help to the charity in feeding vulnerable people in the local community.

Congratulations to the Glastonbury students who achieved the most commendations in their respective year groups. An excellent effort all round!

Thank you to Nadia Tarkowska for volunteering her services as House Photographer to document our future events and fundraising - we look forward to seeing your photographs Nadia.

Also, congratulations to Kaydon Connolly who won a boxing competition, gaining a medal for coming first within his weight range. A great sporting achievement for the House! Keep up the hard work Glastonbury, your continued involvement and effort means we're on track to win the Easter Cup.

Evesham

Last term, Evesham students participated in a House Day during which there was a range of activities going on including a PLTS teamwork challenge, charity day planning and 'Evesham's Got Talent'. The talent show was hosted by Karolina Huntley and showcased a wide range of Evesham's talents including Alfie Simpkins and his diablo, Robbie Dee rapping, a Year 7 drama performance, 'Broken Strings' performing a track and a large selection of fantastic singers. Well done to everyone who took part.

Evesham also got fundraising during our annual Charity Week. We had a range of activities organised included space hopper races organised by 8B, various cake sales, tuck shops, 11W's sponsored scooter rides and 11B's gunging of Karolina Huntley!

As a house we raised a total of £307 pounds for our House charity CALM. The money raised will help support local families with children suffering from cancer and leukemia. Well done Evesham!

Upcoming events for the remainder of January and February include House hockey and football matches and a range of maths challenges and relays.



Walsingham

Congratulations to all Walsingham students who have moved their house point total score to second place! In particular, a big well done to the students in each year group for Walsingham who have achieved the highest number of commendations.

Our charity fundraising day raised a huge £372 for Wiltshire Air Ambulance. So well done to all of you for your hard work and dedication put into organising the fundraising events and making it so much fun!

Upcoming events for the remainder of January and February include House hockey and football matches and a range of maths challenges and relays.

Keep working hard Walsingham, we are well on the way to pushing Glastonbury from the top spot and winning the Easter Cup!