



May 2013 Issue 18

ST. JOSEPH'S NEWS



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Hard work is the secret of our success

As this newsletter goes to press we have arrived at an important time in our College calendar: GCSE, AS and A Level examinations.

For students in Years 10, 11, 12 and 13, this week is the start of six weeks of hard work in revising for and taking examinations that will help them to realise their future ambitions. Already a number of our students have made great progress, as shown by the fact that 68% of our Year 11 students have already passed their GCSE in Mathematics, our highest pass rate yet for this subject.

Whilst examinations are important, a school is not defined by GCSE and A Level results alone. On 2 May 2013, our Young Enterprise Team entered the regional Young Enterprise Competition, returning to St. Joseph's the next day laden with trophies. All participants demonstrated exemplary skills in team work and project management that would be highly prized in industry.

Equally, a school is not defined by success in competitions. We are highly fortunate in the cultural diversity and experiences that we can offer at St. Joseph's through foreign exchanges and the Comenius project. In March the College hosted students from Turkey, Poland and Italy for a week, whilst in April a number of our students hosted visiting Dutch students for the day. All of these events add a richness to our lives that cannot possibly be gained by academic work alone.

All of the above gives you a flavour of what St. Joseph's is about and you can read more inside about the busy lives our students lead in their sporting, cultural, charitable and academic lives. Inevitably, all of this means that our students have high expectations of themselves now and in their futures. Whilst it is always sad to see students leave us, they do so ready to pursue the exciting challenge of life, hope and faith that awaits.

So, we wish all our hard-working, talented students the very best during this examination period. Remember: exams are just the doorway that opens onto the rest of your lives. We want you to walk through that doorway to your new beginnings in September, be it Sixth Form, employment or university. Good luck, may God's blessings go with you.

Mrs Sanders, Assistant Principal, Raising Standards

Prayer before an exam

Lord, thank you that you are with me right now.
Your love surpasses all fear.
I give you the anxiety I feel.
I surrender all my worries to you.
Clear my mind,
Calm my heart,
Still my Spirit,
Relax my being,
That I may always glorify you in everything I write, speak and do.

Amen.

Punctuality at St. Joseph's

Please note that we are operating a text message system for students that arrive late to College or to lessons.

If a student is required to attend the late detention on Friday, a text is sent to a parent. Letters are also given to the students.

This is to support students in acquiring good time-keeping habits in preparation for working life.

Summer Reviews 2013

The Summer Reviews will be available on ePortal on the following dates:

Year 8	Wednesday 12th June
Year 10	Tuesday 9th July
Year 9	Wednesday 10th July
Year 7	Thursday 11th July

Just a reminder that from September the Student Reviews for each year will only be printed when this has been requested. They will be available on ePortal each term (dates to be notified).

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.

Dates for your diary

23rd May	Year 13 Leavers' Mass
24th May	College closes for students
3rd June	College reopens for students
w/c 16th June	Refugee Week
w/c 24th June	Performing Arts Competition
28th June	Year 11 Prom
4th July	Year 6 Induction
5th July	Year 13 Prom
17th July	College Sports Day
18th July	Gifted and Talented Celebration Evening
24th July	College closes for students

Important Exam Information and Dates

The Summer External Examinations will take place between Monday 13th May and Tuesday 25th June.

If you are sick on an exam day, it is essential that you see a doctor - the same day - to obtain a doctor's note/letter, which clearly states your illness/condition. This must be forwarded to the Exams Office within two days of your missed exam.

If you arrive late to any exam, the exam board may refuse to mark your exam paper.

GCE Exam Results (Thursday 15th August): A2 from 8:30am, AS from 9.00am

GCSE Exam Results (Thursday 22nd August): from 10.00am

If you want someone to collect your exam results on your behalf, you must provide them with a signed letter authorising this. Exam results will not be posted if uncollected. Any enquiries about exam results must be received by the Exams Office BEFORE 18th September.

The Exam Boards charge for all enquiries about exam results. It is the responsibility of the candidate/candidates' parents to pay for these charges prior to any enquiry application being made.

Exam certificates can be collected from the College from Wednesday 27th November. It should be noted that employers, colleges of further education and universities will ask to see these certificates as proof of your qualifications.

If you want someone to collect your exam certificates on your behalf, you must provide them with a signed letter authorising them to do this. Exam certificates will not be posted if uncollected.

Pupil Premium Funding Information

Pupil Premium Funding is allocated to schools to support students from less affluent backgrounds. It ensures that those students have the same educational advantages and are able to progress and benefit from the same further and higher education opportunities as others. This additional funding is awarded according to the number of students we have on roll who are eligible for Free School Meals (FSM).

What does this mean for us at St. Joseph's?

The simple answer is the more students we have claiming FSM, the more funding we get for the College. This additional funding means we are then able to create and finance more opportunities for your children.

Not only does this extend to meals but can help with uniform, equipment and educational trips: all the costly items that your child will need, or ask for, during the course of an academic year.

We are all living through challenging times financially. If you believe that your circumstances make your child eligible for FSM, please contact Gill Ealey at the College to discuss this in confidence. Not only will your child benefit but the College, as a whole, will too. In this way we can work together to strive for the best and happiest outcomes for your child.

Busy week with Comenius

The beginning of March marked the English leg of the Comenius partnership. An exciting week was had by our students and those visiting from Italy, Turkey and Poland. It started with a trip to Stonehenge and Salisbury. Bitterly cold winds were braved by our international friends as they took a quick tour around the historic stones at Stonehenge. Relative warmth in the shape of Salisbury Cathedral was a welcome relief. The stunning baptism pool drew gasps of admiration, as did the stained glass windows, the Amnesty International candle and the impressive Gothic architecture.

On Wednesday a trip to Bath was organised, visiting the Royal Crescent, taking a bus tour and going to the Roman Baths. Thursday morning was spent experiencing lessons in an English school before spending the afternoon looking around the Steam Museum and the Outlet Centre. We also took the opportunity to visit Cirencester on Friday, visiting the Corinium Museum.

The week was a brilliant success and was enjoyed by the visiting staff and students immensely - thank you to the staff and parents who gave up their time and spare beds to host our visitors. A small group are heading off at the end of May to Poland for the final leg of this partnership.

Triumph at Young Enterprise Final



Our Year 10 team, Tangled Strings, with their prizes

On the 2nd May two teams from St. Joseph's won places at the Regional Final of the Young Enterprise Competition 2013. Our College was the only one to have more than one team representing it in the final and we were up against formidable competition from across the county. The teams from Years 10 and 12 faced a panel of 15 judges from prominent businesses, who assessed their trade stalls and presentations. This is their account of what happened:

'Since September we have been working on this year's Young Enterprise Award, creating a company and developing a product. On 2nd May our company, Little Stars, along with the Year 10 team, Tangled Strings, represented our College at the Wiltshire County Final. Tangled Strings were producing hand-made bracelets and we were developing a book of children's stories called 'Third Star from the Moon.' Our competitors had developed a wide range of products including perfumed lip balms, iPad covers, designer boxer shorts, personalised jigsaw puzzles and Christmas tree decorations.

After talking to the judges, who quizzed us about our company finances and team work skills, we had to make a presentation to over 100 people. Both teams did a great job of explaining the processes behind the setting up of their companies and the journey we had to go on to make our ideas a reality.

Our product is aimed at 6-7 year olds. It is a collection of letters from a Tooth Fairy called Tinsel to a little girl called Hannah, describing her adventures as she collects the discarded milk teeth of children. It is written in memory of Hannah Wood, the sister of a member of our team, who had RETT Syndrome and passed away aged only 6. All profits from the book will go to a charity that is funding research into RETT.

Both teams have had great fun working together to develop our business ideas. We have all expanded our enterprise skills; including our abilities to delegate responsibility, to work as a team, to meet deadlines, to present to the public, and to work out the finances for a profitable company. In the process of doing this both teams have overcome many obstacles and become closer in business and friendship at the same time.

We were very proud to win five trophies for St Joseph's and are determined to keep working on our projects to ensure that our business ideas fully realise their potential.'

Jess Neate

The two teams did indeed win five trophies in the final, more than any other school or college. The Year 10 team (Tangled Strings) won the awards for Best Report and Best under 16 Team, while the Year 12 team (Little Stars) won the awards for Best Use of Media, Best Presentation and Most Outstanding Individual for their Managing Director, Jessica Neate. Congratulations to the girls, who have hopefully inspired students in Years 9, 10 and 11 to have a go at forming their own company next year, taking part in the competition in 2014.



Our Year 12 team, Little Stars, with their Awards

Year 10 delivering training at Swindon Central Library

During April, a group of students had the opportunity to visit the Central Library to help elderly people learn basic ICT skills.

We all agreed it was a fun experience, not only the teaching part but also getting to know people of a different generation and hearing all their stories and what life was like without the technology we have today.

The learners ranged in age from 60 to 78 and by the end all of them could use a mouse and search the internet. We were surprised that things we take for granted were a real challenge to them. They were fascinated by the ability to see old videos on YouTube and spent time watching black and white programmes from when they were children. Also, using Google maps, they were amazed that they could see their houses.

Overall, we thought that it was a worthwhile day out in which we were also able to experience what our teachers go through every day and what a rewarding, challenging job it must be.

Megan Nash and Dario Giampa



Psychology Conference



On the 20th March the Psychology Department took a group of eight students to an A-Level Psychology Conference held in London.

There were a number of thought provoking lectures by psychologists from universities across the country. The topics of the talks included Auschwitz, Obedience and Heroes, The Psychology of Peace, The Psychology of Everyday Life, Inside a Mind of a Serial Killer and Memory Matters.

The keynote talk was given by Elizabeth Loftus, one of the foremost psychologists of her generation, who focuses her research on the malleability of memory. Loftus spoke about how people can be led to believe that they remember the past differently than it really was. She showed how through suggestion false memories can be implanted, in such a way that people falsely remember events that never actually occurred. Loftus was able to illustrate how these false beliefs are particularly important in legal cases.

The students (and staff!) were especially pleased to have had the opportunity to meet Elizabeth Loftus, as her case studies are studied in detail as part of their AS and A2 courses. The visit was very enjoyable and inspiring, with Year 12 students expressing a wish to attend another conference next year.

Teachers for the day

Year 12 students recently spent a Flexible Friday with children from Holy Rood Junior School, working with them on a community project for RE.

Students got the opportunity to teach Year 5 pupils about different aspects of three world religions; an enjoyable and interesting experience for all.

The younger pupils took part in the lesson and also got a tour of the College before being accompanied back to Holy Rood by some of the St. Joseph's students, some of whom got to see their old junior school and how it had changed!

The day formed part of the Year 12 National Open College Network Level 2 General Award in RE, as well as giving both sets of students an opportunity to work collaboratively, continuing the close ties between the two schools.

Python Programming Workshop

As part of our on-going commitment to the Network of Computer Science Excellence, St. Joseph's hosted a Python workshop for teachers. The event was attended by over twenty teachers from various schools in Swindon. As the event was so well attended, staff from St. Joseph's enrolled the services of some of the Year 10 Computer Science students. Hannah Lloyd, Alessia Poto and William Ash supported the teachers during the session and their services were so well received one teacher commented, "I wish we had such wonderful students at our school," whilst another one was amazed by their programming abilities.

Hannah, Alessia and William were an absolute credit to the College. Well done!



French Exchange

We welcomed back thirteen French students at the beginning of April and had a fantastic time together – skating, visiting Bath and having a meal in town. I hope the rest of the school had a chance to meet up with the visitors and practise some of their French on them. If you are interested in joining in the French Exchange next year please let Miss Price or one of the other language teachers know now, so we can let you have a letter next year. The visit is open to anyone at all (whether you study French or not) in Years 10-13.



Busy month for Arts Award students

April was a busy month for our Year 9 students working towards their Bronze Arts Award. A visit to the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford offered them an excellent opportunity to respond to, and be inspired by, a range of artifacts from across the world. Pieces as diverse as weaponry and jewellery are exhibited in the museum, which has the feel of an oversized Victorian curiosity shop. Working together in groups, students drew, photographed and discussed everything from tribal body art to shrunken heads and the evolution of submachine guns! Lunch in the sun gave everyone a brief opportunity to look at the range of excellent drawings produced, great additions to their Bronze Award folders.



On the 17th April, our Arts Award students were invited to take part in the 'Live Draw' event in town. Hosted by renowned international figure painter Juliet Wood and supported by Swindon College and the Mayor, our students embraced the opportunity to produce figure drawings from life models.

Working alongside artists, art students from Swindon College and other local primary and secondary schools, our students did some outstanding drawings. So impressed was Ms Wood with the sensitivity of the drawings produced by two of our students that she has invited Ifunanya Ugboogu and Olivia Nowicka to enjoy a weekend workshop in her Marlborough art studio. Our students' drawings have since been on public display at Swindon College, alongside Ms Wood's own work.

Over the next month, our students can look forward to working with a local primary school, teaching a group of Year 5 students how to make an art display, before assembling their folders for assessment in July.

Hope and dreams for our new Pope

Year 9 recently spent the day studying Pope Francis' early life and the electoral process for a new Pope. They reflected on their hopes and dreams for what he might accomplish, writing prayers which have been collated by Clifton Diocese and sent off to the Vatican as a book, with contributions from all the Catholic schools in the Diocese. The St. Joseph's entry can be seen on our website.

Coming up in the Art, Design and Technology Department

St. Joseph's Art Department Annual Sixth Form Exhibition of Art and Photography will also include Technology this year and will be held at the Post Modern Gallery in the town centre on Monday 1st-5th July. Please do come along and see the students' work.

We also still have four places remaining for Years 12, 10 and 9 (taking Art/Textiles as an option) for our Cornwall trip in June. Please see Mrs Wiltshire for details.

Well done to all in their recent exams and don't forget to follow us on Twitter – The Art Oracle or @ADTstjosephs.



Celebrating our 'Gifted and Talented'

At St. Joseph's we like to celebrate the achievements of all our students. The Gifted and Talented (G&T) Celebration Evening on Thursday July 18th starts at 6pm and will be a showcase of the best of the College, including academic work and performing arts. It will recognise the best in each subject from every year. Invitations will be sent out nearer the time, but please make a date in your diaries now.

The G&T section of the website has moved to within the Curriculum heading and will highlight G&T work from across the College throughout the year. For the latest news and links to interesting articles you can also follow the G&T Twitter feed on @sjccgandt.

Tutors and the school community would also love to hear about what pupils have been achieving outside of school hours – if your child has done something noteworthy or, if you have any other questions about G&T, please do email Mr Davies on mdavies@stjosephs.swindon.sch.uk.

"I want to go to university to study Computer Science."

"I'm planning on doing Veterinary Science at Edinburgh"

"I'm looking at either Law or PPE at Oxford and am on course to get there with my grades."

These are just a selection of the ambitions heard from our current Year 10, 11, 12 and 13 students, all of whom have been part of the Villiers Park Scholars Programme over the last few years.



What is the Scholars Programme?

Started in 2009 by the Villiers Park Educational Trust to encourage able students from less advantaged backgrounds to fulfil their academic potential, the Scholars Programme aims to gain those students places at leading universities and other centres of excellence, tipping the scales of equality back towards those who are educated in the state sector.

The Scholars Programme is a four year programme, run from Year 10 to Year 13, and in 2009 Swindon was chosen as one of only two pilot towns in the country where it would be implemented, as somewhere with an historically low number of aspiring university entrants. St. Joseph's is one of only a handful of schools in the town where the Scholars Programme is offered to students. The College is already starting to see the fruits of being part of it, with students who may not have previously considered university going on to study degree courses such as medicine and to take up places at leading institutions, including Oxford.

What's involved

Those who have taken part have been able to work with specialist learning mentors over the key GCSE and A Level years, working through 'Stepping Stones to Excellence', a progression plan that students draft to help them develop study and life skills.

They have taken part in annual residential courses, designed to build their self-confidence and communication skills and give them the opportunity to mix with students from other schools who are starting to have similar aspirations. University master classes have been part of the programme each year, giving students a taste of what life is really like on campus and encouraging them to aspire to some of the best institutions in the country (and the world). Subject specific residential courses in areas such as Maths, English and Science, whilst challenging, have also pushed the students to realise the level at which they could be studying. Research into university courses and the specific subjects and grades needed also takes place earlier than normal, which has helped students with A Level choices and the work they need to do to achieve their aims. All say how doing this with their mentor has been massively beneficial.

Students' thoughts

When speaking to students who have been part of the Scholars Programme they talk of how it has helped them improve their study skills, their ability to manage their workload and speak to their teachers if they have questions. Over and over again the students say it has helped them to 'focus' and, for some, how working with their mentor has meant they have been able to identify their areas of strength and the university courses that would be suited to them. Scholars have worked on creating their CVs and university applications, saying how 'nothing is lost', and of how aware their mentor is of all they have achieved in their time at St. Joseph's.

Some students on the programme say they would have considered university but for others it has made them realise that it is a 'good place' which is 'not just academic but offers personal gain' and being part of the programme 'opened my mind to so many things, things that I can do'.



Moving on

This confidence and self belief is amply illustrated by the types of courses students who have been through the Villiers Park programme apply for, and the universities they apply to. Across the Scholars Programme 76% of all participants who completed Year 13 in September 2012 gained a place at university, with 52% taking up a place at a leading institution or other centre of excellence. When speaking to St. Joseph's students not one of them regret taking a place on the Scholars Programme and all of them would recommend it to their peers. Mentors talk of students 'blossoming' and of working with them to instil confidence, so that they can deal with life's downs as well as ups, a skill that will see them through school, university and beyond.

Plans for next year

From September 2013 the Villiers Park programme will be based at St. Joseph's continuing to work with students, complementing what already happens in and out of the classroom. Being part of the programme is a perfect example of how the College delivers on its mission of 'raising aspirations', and can be seen through the success and achievement of the Villiers Park 'scholars'. With the programme being based at the College limited places may open up to students who meet the Villiers Park criteria and we will continue to work closely with the Villiers Park staff to identify those students.

Your child and social networking

The issue of the inappropriate use of social networking sites is one that has been raised with students frequently in Citizenship lessons and assemblies over recent years. The popularity of digital communication through well known media such as Twitter, Blackberry Messenger and Facebook has increased steadily over the last five years. With this growth in popularity has come a growth in the number of cases of these sites being used inappropriately by young people. To protect young people from the malicious use of social networking, or from the embarrassing consequences of images and words they place on websites today coming back to haunt them in their adult lives, we have advised students to take steps to manage their privacy settings, their contact lists of 'friends' and to use discretion with the words and images they commit to the world-wide digital archive.

As parents we know you would wish to support us in these efforts to encourage students to manage their digital media use. We would like you to consider these questions about your son or daughters social networking habits:



Do you know how many Facebook or other social networking accounts they have?

Do you know how many 'friends' they have on their contact list?

Do you know who these 'friends' are?

Does your son or daughter know who these 'friends' are?

Are you aware of the details on your son or daughter's digital profile?

Has your son or daughter updated their privacy settings in the last four weeks?

We are trying to encourage students to review their contact lists. A belief that large contact lists are an indication of a person's popularity has led to many students building up a vast network of links with total strangers. This is making them vulnerable to exposing their personal information to people they do not know and have no way of being able to trust.

The potential risks of using these social networking sites are always tempered by the fact that any communication about them happens between 'named' parties. We would like to draw parents' attention to ASK.FM. This social networking site allows people to communicate anonymously. As such it has become extremely popular with people who want to use digital communication maliciously, to intimidate, threaten and abuse other users of the site, safe in the knowledge that they can do so with their identities hidden.

The College has become increasingly concerned about this site recently when it has played a crucial role in several cases of cyber-bullying that have resulted in huge upset

being caused to numerous students across several year groups.

With such a wide range of social networking sites available to young people, the College cannot see why anyone would choose to use this anonymous service unless they had a reason to want to keep their identity secret. We are encouraging all students to avoid using ASK.FM and would like parents to ensure that it is blocked on the digital media at home.

We would like to ensure that social networking sites are used in a way that will enrich your children's lives. Thank you for your support in helping us to try to limit the negative impact of inappropriate use of this technology.

Mr Stoten



Duke of Edinburgh Award Update

Congratulations to the 90 students who completed their Final Bronze expedition in the Mendips in April. Also, congratulations to twelve Wider Key Skills students from Year 12 who successfully completed the expedition section of their Silver Award.

On May 15th Karen McKay, Laura Sutherland and Paul Moscrop received their Gold Award at St. James's Palace by the Duke of Edinburgh, an outstanding achievement and commitment to completing all aspects of the Award!

There will be an Awards Ceremony in College (invitation only) on Tuesday June 18th for all those who have completed all sections of the Award this year.



House News

Buckfast



Lee-ann Popowicz and Rob Waterhouse from 11A (Buckfast) presenting a cheque for £568 to Alison Fielden from SCWAD

On behalf of Buckfast House, students from 11A were pleased to present their charity SCWAD (Swindon Children Without a Diagnosis) with a cheque for money raised this year.

This included £372 raised during Charity Week and £196 raised by Year 13 ICT students in organising and running the KS3 disco in February. Many thanks to all the students in Buckfast and Year 13 for their efforts.

We wish all of Year 11 Buckfast the very best for their futures. Their contribution to the House has been fantastic and they will be greatly missed.

Walsingham

Many congratulations to all Walsingham students for winning the Easter Cup! This is a fantastic achievement, especially as it is our first cup win. It was very well deserved after all the hard work you put in by winning House events and earning general commendations and Praise Postcards.

The House Day on Friday 22nd March was a huge success for Walsingham. All our students put a lot of effort into all tasks and managed to earn 554 house points in the PLTS challenge alone. Heads of House were so pleased with the Easter creations from students that they have displayed them in the Heads of House office!

This term, so far, we are currently third in total house point scores but, as before, there is still a chance to boost the number of house points through Praise Postcards and commendations to win the Summer Cup. A big well done to John Ramos (9M) and Raquel Guerreiro (7M) who are currently on the most House points in Walsingham this term. Keep up the good work!

Well done to all tutor groups in Walsingham who have put a lot of hard work into making some amazing tutor prayer boxes. The overall winner for Walsingham was Ms Mistretta's tutor group 10E, so a big well done to them.

Events this term include a Maths Sudoku House Competition, a Maths Chess Championship and in Graphics a House poster competition.

Evesham

We finished last term with a House Day which included a range of inter-house competitions, including an Easter themed PLTS challenge, students researching and designing their own Festival and a Code Cracking Challenge, which led to an Easter treat. Evesham did very well in the PLTS challenge scoring 531 points!

Also last term we had two representatives from our House charity CALM (Children's Cancer and Leukaemia Movement) visit the College.

Orla Smith and Stephen Caayao in 7W presented them with their cheque and learnt a great deal about the fantastic work that CALM do. You can see how we have been supporting CALM on their website (www.calmcharity.org).



Children's Cancer and Leukaemia Movement

Google Custom Search Search

2013 | March | 19th - CALM#

St Joseph's supports CALM

Many thanks to all the students and staff at St Joseph's Catholic College in Swindon for raising £372 for the Swindon Children's Cancer And Leukaemia Movement (CALM).

The money was raised during the school's 'charity week' in December, when four charities were supported. CALM was the choice of the 'Evesham' house.

Money was raised through a series of fun events including a 'Gangnam' style dance performance and a gunging of some of the teachers.

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Most Recent:

- [Sainsbury's cheque presentation](#) - CALM Charity - 27th April '13
- [MP and Intel support golf day](#) - CALM - 19th April '13
- [Fundraising is a real family affair](#) - Swindon Advertiser - 22th March '13
- [St Joseph's supports CALM](#) - CALM - 19th March '13
- [Pride of Swindon Awards 2013](#) - Swindon Advertiser - 15th March '13
- [More articles by Publication Date >](#)



Glastonbury

A big well done to Elie Beale, Luke Wood, Annamaria Mazzotta, Michael Prinzi and Abbie Fiore for getting the most commendations in their year groups, you have all represented the house brilliantly.

Well done to all Glastonbury students who have taken part in competitions in the name of their House, such as those who represented the College so wonderfully at the Poetry Slam Competition (Steffanie Vitale Richardson, Grace Dabner, and Raphael Adenkule).

There is currently a Graphics poster competition running so submit your entries and win points for the house!

Best of luck to all Year 10 and 11 Glastonbury students over the exam period. May the spirit of the House be with you as you strive towards success.

Our thoughts are also with Year 11 Glastonbury students who will be leaving our College at the end of this term – thank you for all the many memorable contributions you have made in the name of your House.