



## Bidding a fond farewell to Mrs Harries

As you will already be aware, Mrs. Harries has decided to retire as Principal. This has been a difficult decision for her to reach and whilst we, as governors, are very sad to see her go we fully understand and support her decision.

I have written to you all individually to explain how the Board of Governors will be managing this transition period already but wanted to take this opportunity to confirm the details.

Mr. Hathaway and Mr. Slater will be stepping into the role of Joint Acting Principals in this interim period, taking on responsibilities for academic and pastoral areas respectively and fully supported by the rest of the Leadership team. We are aiming to appoint a new Principal for the start of the 2013/4 academic year and will, of course, keep you informed of all developments.

The Board of Governors and teaching and support staff wish to thank Mrs Harries for everything that she has done for St. Joseph's and wish her all the very best for the future. The College will be a very different place without her, but her achievements will be remembered by all.

Stephen Lake,  
Chair of Governors



## Prayer

Loving Lord,

We thank you during this Easter season for the gift of life.

You showed us through your passion, death and resurrection the love you have for each and every one of us.

Help us be the Easter Sunday people you invite us to be.

Living our life in all its fullness, sharing with each other the joy, hope and love that Easter brings.

Amen.

## Year 11 Success

Results that arrived last week show that 56% of our Year 11 students already have their GCSE in Mathematics at A\* - C grade, whilst 100% of our top set Year 11 students have gained their English Literature GCSE, with 55% of them gaining A/A\* grade. Currently, 13% of Year 11 students already have their GCSEs in Mathematics and English, with the majority yet to take examinations in June 2013.

This is excellent news! Whilst we thank colleagues across the whole College for their support of our students in their examinations, Year 11 must be congratulated on their hard work and considerable success at this stage. We are sure you join us in wishing them every success this summer.

## Governors' Update

We have had questions on two specific issues, which we wanted to share with all parents:

1. We have had comments on the College website and we are considering ways that will offer better opportunities to feedback directly, particularly when information is seen to be out of date. Queries were raised regarding the quotes used on the website from our OFSTED inspection. These 2008 quotes are however the most recent, as that was the last time the College was inspected. We welcome all other feedback on the site and are keen to ensure it is a key source of information for students, parents and staff.

2. We agree that the league tables were disappointing and whilst not making excuses, they were impacted to an extent by issues in the English and Maths examination gradings widely reported in the media last year. Nevertheless, the College did take immediate action to address issues, with specific measures put in place to ensure exam results improved. You will have seen evidence of the initial success of these measures in the February 2013 Newsletter (issue 16), where strong results were reported in grades already achieved from early sitting of both English and Maths GCSEs. We are expecting similarly good results from the May/June examinations and will, of course, keep you updated.

## Dates for your diary

25th March	Easter holiday commences
8th April	College re-opens
18th April	Year 8 Parents' Evening (ABLM)
23rd April	Year 8 Parents' Evening (CESW)
25th-28th April	Year 10 Kintbury Retreat
1st May	Year 8 Transition Evening
3rd May	Staff Training Day
16th May	Year 7 Parents' Evening (ABLM)
16th May	Year 11 Awards and Leavers Mass
21st May	Year 7 Parents' Evening (CESW)
23rd May	Year 13 Study Leave and Leavers Mass

## Primary School Presentation and Consultation Evening

Thank you to everyone who attended our recent consultation evening on the proposed new primary school. The project team, architects and governors all found it useful to hear the views of residents and parents and welcomed the opportunity to be able to address some of the questions, which were mostly focused on admissions to the school and access to the site.

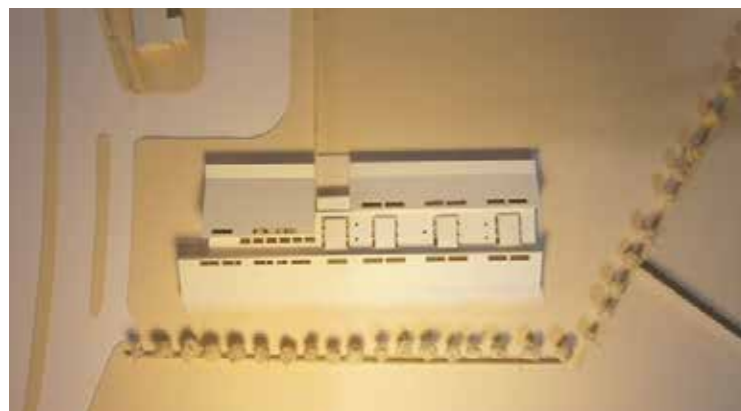
Governor David Bason said of the evening,

*"Yesterday saw an enthusiastic team of architects presenting the outline plans for the new St Joseph's building, designed to extend the College to include the provision of Catholic primary education."*

*The presentation, consisting of plans and drawings plus a 3D model, amply illustrated the hard work that had gone into the design of a teaching and learning environment that will meet the aspirations of the College to provide the best quality education that it can.*

*This is a welcome new stage of development for the College and strikes a very positive note, showing how Swindon is investing in the future of its young people."*

A model of the proposed school can be seen on our website. The admissions policy for the primary school is currently in the consultation period and will be able to be viewed very soon. We will be accepting applications for admission from September 2013, for entry in September 2014.



## Change of date for Year 11 Leaving Day

We have decided to move the Year 11 Leaving Day to Thursday 16th May, from the previously advised date of Friday 17th May. This is to ensure that all Year 11 students can attend their last moments at College, with no clashes with exams or Flexible Friday activities. If we continue with Friday 17th May many students would miss the final mass and ceremony and many others would go straight from the ceremony to an exam, which would take away from the celebratory atmosphere of the day.

Students will therefore start their study leave on the afternoon of Thursday 16th May. If you have any questions or queries about this please contact your child's Student Manager in the first instance.

## What's the best thing about teaching?

This was the question asked of trainee teachers recently at St. Joseph's. Trainees from the SCITT (School Centred Initial Teacher Training) course, when quizzed about what they loved best about teaching, gave the following responses:

"The 'Oh I get it' moment"

"Helping students to realise their potential."

"Being able to learn alongside students"

"Seeing students do something they couldn't do before."

"Seeing how students enjoy learning"

Many thanks to the trainees for their enthusiasm and the students for giving such a positive impression to their new teachers.



## What's your Goal?

The whole of Year 10 participated in the 'What's Your Goal' Football League initiative to support young people in applying for jobs. The scheme is supported by Swindon Town's Football in the Community Trust, who provide five positions over the Easter holidays to successful applicants. The sessions encouraged our students to have a greater understanding of the literacy needed when applying for positions, as well as of the job application process. A big thank you to Clive Maguire from STFC for coming in and talking to our students.

## Art News

Year 10 Art students recently had a great time looking at the exhibits at the V&A to support their GCSE studies. The Fashion Exhibition Room had completed its renovation and offered a great showcase of fashion from 1200 to the modern day. Students also enjoyed the Jewellery Room and the Japanese samurai sword collection. Natalia Kaparuk said it was 'an unforgettable experience', whilst other Year 10 students also expressed their amazement at the great collection the V&A has to offer. An enjoyable day for all.

Our next Art trip is a two day residential to Cornwall, visiting the Eden Project, the beach, the Tate and the Barbara Hepworth gallery at St Ives. We are able to offer this trip for £100 and it is open to all Year 12 Art and Photography students and Year 10 Art students. Places may become available to Year 9 at a later date. There are 25 places available.



## Art Exams

Exam	Date
AS Photography (Year 12)	20th March
AS Art (Year 12)	22nd March
A2 Photo (Year 13)	10th, 11th 12th April
GCSE Art (Year 11)	18th, 19th April
A2 Art Exam (Year 13)	24th, 25th and 26th April
AS Photography Hand in	25th April
AS Art Hand in	7th May

## 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.

## Duke of Edinburgh News

Angelo Iannatelli, Sofia Carnero Charles and Fergus Cowie, three former students have been presented by the Duke of Edinburgh with the prestigious Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award at St James Palace on 13th March.

We have also had advance notice that two other former students, Paul Moscrop and Karen McKay, will receive their Gold Award in the next few months. They all worked really hard during their time in College to attain this Award, on both the Expedition and Physical, Skills and Volunteering sections. Well done to everyone for this fantastic achievement.

## Expedition Dates

Year 9	
Practice Expedition Lambourn Downs	Saturday 13th April – Sunday 14th April
Qualifying Expedition Mendips	Saturday 27th April – Sunday 28th April
Year 10 Flexible Pathway	
Practice Expedition Lambourn Downs	Monday 15th April – Tuesday 16th April
Qualifying Expedition Mendips	Thursday 25th April – Friday 26th April

## Fairtrade Success

Since the beginning of this academic year, the Fairtrade Franchise at St. Joseph's has sold over £3300 worth of Fairtrade goods. We have supplied stock to Commonweal School, Holy Rood Church, The Moravian Church and The Rodbourne Methodist Church. £500 has been raised as commission for our outreach project to El Salvador.

Fairtrade Fortnight saw the College busy with activities, including a visit from Barbara Aftelak (the Head of Swindon's Fairtrade Coalition) and a cake bake, which raised £43 for the El Salvador Outreach Project. Students and staff from the College will be helping the Arcatao Christian community to build a memorial chapel in memory of those who died in the Civil War, travelling to El Salvador in the summer to help with construction.

Students are also selling raffle tickets for the second week of Fairtrade Fortnight. Thanks to everyone for their on-going support.



## Maths Challenge

This year's Maths Challenge was held at Nova Hreod. Three schools participated: St Joseph's, Isambard and Nova Hreod. Representing St. Joseph's were two teams - Team Y (Orla Smith, Chelsea Fernandes, Stephen Caayao and Casper Andersen) and Team X (Binit Gurung, Alana Dooley, Georgina Muroki and Joe Molloy).

Everyone was ready for the first challenge, a time challenge to be completed in 20 minutes. As soon as the timer started we began. Team Y split the questions up to save time, a successful strategy that saw us leading with 42 points. Isambard A came second.

Next we had the cross number challenge. This was harder, as we were working in pairs and we were running out of time. We guessed the remaining numbers, giving us 38 points which kept us at the top of the leader board by just one point! Isambard were catching up...

The last challenge was a Maths relay, our best challenge yet! We achieved 45 points and finished top of the leader board. We had won!

We had put in a huge amount of effort and it had paid off. Well done St. Joseph's!

*Chelsea Fernandes*



## Intermediate Maths Challenge

Excellent results for the Intermediate Maths Challenge, an individual competition for Years 9-11. Katie Smith did spectacularly well, getting through to the next round (the Mathematical Olympiad). Naomi South also got a Gold, with the rest of the St. Joseph's competitors achieving a fantastic haul of nine silver and three bronze awards. Well done to everyone who took part.

## Working hard on the Cambridge GCSE English Exam

During October and November 2012, 86 of our Year 11 students sat the Core Cambridge First Language GCSE examination. Feedback on the Cambridge Examination had been excellent and for our core entry (similar to foundation tier of entry) students this provided them with an invaluable opportunity to focus on achieving their C grade in English early. For those who passed this would also alleviate some of the pressure on them the following summer, when the majority of their exams would be sat. For those who didn't pass they would have another chance to retake in the summer of 2013, invaluable experience of having already sat the exam once behind them. Students rose to the challenge immediately, focusing on improving and developing their skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening.

To support students with this opportunity we organised three hot-housing days, in October and November. Students received intensive support on a range of areas, including exam technique, reading skills and descriptive writing, all focused on supporting them in achieving a C grade in their GCSE English. Many of these students were C/D borderline and worked in groups in the Main Hall on various activities that were lead and facilitated by the English team. The feedback from students on the day and afterwards, in a student questionnaire, has been excellent. All who took part said how much they learnt from the hot-housing days as well as how supported they felt by their English teachers in the challenge of taking an exam early.

The results were impressive and a real testimony to how well students had learnt. For those who did not pass first time they are now working in smaller retake classes, aiming to resit the exam in May 2013. For these students they have been able to review the learning experience of their first exam, setting specific targets for making progress to ensure they achieve their C grade second time around. Other interventions we have organised have included retaking their Speaking and Listening exam, one-to-one mentoring and after College support sessions. Alongside the Cambridge English GCSE students will also be sitting the AQA English Literature exam in June 2013, therefore having the opportunity of adding another GCSE to their achievements.

The English department would like to recognise and offer our sincerest praise to all of the outstanding efforts and achievement of our Year 11 students, both in congratulating those who passed early and offering our thoughts and prayers to those who will be sitting their exam on Wednesday 15th and Friday 17th May. Well done to you all; we are very proud of you.

*Mrs Ash*

*"I feel really good about getting my C in English because I didn't expect to get it. Also it is a big weight off my shoulders and I will be less stressed whilst taking my other GCSE exams."*

*Mollie O'Dwyer*

## Achieving a 'C' in GCSE English

Moving from the AQA GCSE to the Cambridge GCSE did look a bit difficult to start off with, but as soon as our teachers explained to us exactly what we needed to know, it seemed achievable. We looked at the basic things we had to be good at and learned quickly in order to make sure that we got our grade C in English. The best thing I think the English department did for us was the hot housing days, where we had three separate days (on Thursday 18 October, Monday 22 October and Monday 5 November) to learn all we needed to know about the Cambridge English GCSE and understand their exam requirements to get good marks before the exam we took at the end of October and beginning of November. Students even enjoyed a free school dinner on the teacher training day! Now that I am doing a retake I am hoping to use all these skills in improving in reading, writing and speaking and listening. I am going to put everything I learnt on those hot housing days and all the things which Mrs Ash is teaching me in the lessons since to make sure I get a grade C in English.

*Sylvia Fernandes*

## Preparing for the Speaking and Listening Exam

The Cambridge English Speaking and Listening exam, worth 20% of your overall exam, gives you a perfect chance to earn some key marks by talking about a topic of interest; for example what you like, loathe or your hobbies. Personally, if you want to get a good grade I think you should talk about what you really love or hate because by doing this you are talking and expressing your feelings, which will get you that higher band mark. Always include rhetorical devices such as rhetorical questions to make the listener feel involved and to make it interesting. Try to include facts on the topic you are doing as this will show that you're passionate and knowledgeable on your chosen topic. Notably, you should always take well-planned cue cards with well-structured prompts that relate to your topic; these will help you while you are speaking and act as guidelines. Plan, prepare and practise. By doing this you will give yourself the best chance of getting the grade you want.

*Cahil Monteiro*

## English Literature top sets - great results for early entrants

Year 11 top sets received their AQA English Literature results in early March. With a 100% pass rate, 7 A\*'s, and 50 students achieving A-B grades, they did extraordinarily well.

*"I am really proud of all them. They worked incredibly hard on what is a challenging qualification, sitting their final unit (the poetry examination) in January of this year. When I saw the paper I thought that the questions and poem choices were quite tricky, but I had absolute confidence in them because I know how hard they have all worked. The progress they have made this year is astonishing - I may be biased because they are my classes, but they really are an amazing group of students. I am privileged to teach them."*

*Miss Standley*

*"When I received my results, I was very content. My results this year were greatly improved from last year and I was really impressed by this. Thanks Miss!"*

*Katherine Cenaj*

*"I was really happy with my Literature result, because I was worried about my poetry exam as it's not my strong point. However, I managed to get an A\* overall, which I was really pleased with."*

*Naomi South*

## World Book Night

It is World Book Night on April 23rd 2013. World Book Night (WBN) aims to encourage reading, highlighting how reading changes lives and improves opportunities. Despite this, a third of all households don't have a book in them, 16% of adults aren't fully literate and too many people believe that books and reading aren't for them.

WBN aims to change that by encouraging 20,000 passionate volunteers to put great books directly into the hands of hundreds of thousands of people.

This year Mr Harney, Miss Standley and Mrs Ash are the passionate volunteers and have signed up to become World Book Givers. Miss Standley is offering Schlink's *The Reader*, Miss Griffiths is offering *Treasure Island*, and Mr Harney, the graphic novel *The Dark Judges*. If you would like a copy of any of the books please hand either Miss Griffiths, Mr Harney or Miss Standley a short, persuasive letter detailing your reasons for wanting a copy of the text. Convince us and you may just get a free copy!

You can find out more about the books selected at [www.worldbooknight.org/books](http://www.worldbooknight.org/books).



# Activities & Trips

## Signing up MPs to 'Hungry for Change'...

As some of us may know, St. Joseph's is taking part in CAFOD's 'Hunger for Change' campaign. Students from multiple year groups recently came together to discuss how we can improve the lifestyles of people who go without proper food for weeks, or even months.

Britain is part of the G8, meaning we are better off economically but we still waste a quarter of our food products. The world produces enough food to feed every mouth but an amazing 870 million people go to bed hungry every night.

On the Friday 22nd February we invited Swindon's two MPs, Robert Buckland and Justin Tomlinson, to come and join in our mission to the Prime Minister, for him to take action on this issue. The CAFOD group had sent out leaflets throughout the College for students to fill in and take home. This contained a slip which showed that you are supporting the 'Hungry for Change' campaign.

After we got these slips back, we collected the 'fishes' and 'loaves'. Using the story of the five loaves and two fish (i.e. the feeding of the 5000), we linked the individual fishes to a net to represent a fishing net. This is our display to show that St Joseph's Catholic College is taking part in 'Hungry for Change', which you can see in the Street.

Vanessa Iwuoha and Sanshia De Souza

## ...and questioning them on the topics of the day

On Friday 22nd February the MPs from North and South Swindon, Justin Tomlinson and Robert Buckland, came to visit the College as part of our Citizenship course. This was a great opportunity to see what the politicians views were on current issues.

We asked the MPs for their opinions on the regulation of the press, immigration control, multiculturalism vs. cultural assimilation, changing the voting age, and the role of benefits. Some of these issues are covered in our Citizenship course and this developed our understanding and why politicians have different views. The class also asked the MPs how they got into politics; it was fascinating to hear what paths they took to get to Westminster. This served as an inspiration to the class if any of us want to become politicians in the future.

Adam John

## Stop Press

Students from St. Joseph's have helped CAFOD gather over 10,000 names supporting 'Hungry for Change', calling on the Prime Minister for an end to global hunger. See the story (and our students!) at [www.cafod.org.uk/news](http://www.cafod.org.uk/news).

# Activities & Trips

## Imagining the Year of Faith

Students have been focusing on the Year of Faith this term, making prayer boxes and having a day focused on developing and deepening their understanding of their own faith.

Year 8 students learned about how and why Catholics pray and also produced a booklet of traditional prayers for young children, some of which they hope to send to local primary schools. Groups made short films based on parables from the Gospels before taking time for meditation and reflection, all of which helped them in beginning to complete their Leaders of Faith Award.

Creating prayer boxes in each tutor room has meant that students will be able to write their own prayers, giving them an opportunity in the busy College day to take time for reflection. To encourage students to take part, teachers will be voting on the best prayer box in each year group and also overall for each of the Houses in the College. Doing such activities has engaged students in the Year of Faith in a creative and imaginative way, deepening their understanding and connection with their individual faith.

Below is a prayer box created by 9W. The yellow and blue flags running up to the clock tower are students' names in the tutor group.



## Creating 'mini-sagas' for World Book Day

The College celebrated World Book Day (7th March) by encouraging students from Years 7 and 8 to write mini-sagas: a story that has exactly 50 words, has a beginning, middle and end, and a title that's up to 15 words long. The ILC will be compiling a book of the best mini-sagas and the winners from each year group received a £15 book token.

Congratulations to Domenico Crossman and Kamran Muhid (7M) and Lucia Raymond (8C), who came first, and Alana Dooley (7B) and Jamie-Lee Baker (8C) who were runners-up.

## French exchange to Bethune

We had an amazingly warm welcome and everyone had a brilliant time. Here are a few of the comments from some of the students:

*'I really enjoyed going to France and it was an experience I will never forget. It was great to be able to meet new people and practise my French at the same time as having fun visiting different places. It is something I would love to do again and I look forward to seeing everyone when they come back to England.'*

*'The French Exchange was an amazing experience and I made a lot of good friends.'*

*'I think the French Exchange was a very enjoyable and memorable trip which allowed me to meet new people and learn about the area, culture and school.'*



## 'The Pilgrims' inaugural hockey match

This term marked the inaugural match of the St. Joseph's Sixth Form hockey team or 'The Pilgrims' as they have come to be known. We hosted an experienced team from Farmor's School which boasted a number of county level players but, undaunted, 'The Pilgrims' put up a performance that was cohesive and spirited and earned us a moral victory if not a literal one. Great credit must be given to the entire team although particular performances of note came from W. Ford (cat-like), A. Davies (incisive) and J. Munday (belligerent).



## Football Enrichment

Congratulations to Madrid Kings, who won the latest Year 7 and 8 football enrichment league.



# House News

## Walsingham

A big well done to all Walsingham students for keeping a secure second place in the total house point scores. We are still in with a chance of winning the Easter Cup, so keep earning house points through class commendations and praise postcards. The Easter Cup will be presented to the winning house on our next House Day, which takes place on Friday 22nd March, so we still have time to win our first cup!

Congratulations to all those who are currently working hard to take part in the very exciting school production 'Seussical The Musical', on Thursday 14th and Friday 15th March. If you are taking part in the production, on stage or behind the scenes, please see Miss Hume for a 'well done' praise post card.

To celebrate our Catholic ethos, all students in Years 7-10 are encouraged to design and create a prayer box for their tutor room as part of the prayer box competition. This gives all students the opportunity to write prayers and reflections and place them in the prayer box for tutors/tutees to read out others' thoughts during tutor time. The deadline for prayer boxes is Tuesday 19th March. Heads of House will meet to decide on the best prayer box for each house. This tutor group will then go on to be put in the competition for the best prayer box for all houses. The winning house will win 50 points with runners up winning 25 points. This is a great opportunity for us to bring our house point score closer to first place!

Upcoming events that give you the chance to win even more house points are the Murder Mystery Maths Challenge and a debating competition in RE. Both are coming up this month. Please see department teachers for more information.

Back in February Walsingham came third in the house maths challenge. This earned us 30 house points, so well done to everyone that took part.

Keep working hard Walsingham, let's win our first House Cup on Friday 22nd March!

### Hot off the press...

Congratulations to Manira Rodrigues in 10E, who has been successful in her application for the position of Clerical Administrator at Swindon Town Football Club this Easter. Thanks to Mrs Fraser, all year 10 students took part in the nationwide initiative, 'What's your Goal', and had the opportunity to apply for one of four work experience placements this Easter (photos of the day can be seen on page 2 of this newsletter). Manira saw off competition from 280 applicants and as Clive Maguire, Swindon Town Football in the Community Trust Development Manager, says, "This is a tremendous achievement". We wish Manira all the best in her work experience placement and look forward to hearing all about it.

## Buckfast

This term students in 8A and 8S have achieved over 1000 House points between them, an impressive achievement so well done! They are currently leading the House Points in their year group by over 400 points, following the example of Year 11 who also continue to lead in their year group. Well done and thank you to all for their hard work, both in and beyond the classroom.

Congratulations also go to Christos Anthulakis (8A) and Rob Waterhouse (11A) who were winners in the House Maths Challenge.

We would like to wish the very best to those in Buckfast who are involved with the College production. We look forward to seeing all of your many gifts and talents.

Correction from the last newsletter: During Charity Week Year 11 were instrumental in insuring a Buckfast victory. Almost all of the students in 11A were involved with different charity events and showing real enthusiasm and support for the charity, Swindon Children Without a Diagnosis. Your hard work was much appreciated.

## Evesham

This term we have launched a Prayer Box competition for which students have to design and produce a Prayer Box for their tutor group. So far Evesham have had entries from 7B and 9W. If your tutor group would like to enter the deadline is 19th March. Good luck!

Evesham House also now have a new team of House photographers to capture all the fantastic achievements in our house; Alfie Simpkins, Shane Brinkley, Teresa Farthing, Giorgia Pipitone, Bethanie Hale, Cheyenne Stewart- Flannery and Rebecca Lamb. Happy snapping!!

Finally, well done to all Evesham students who have taken part in this year's College production.

## Glastonbury

Thank you to all Glastonbury students who have entered competitions and volunteered their time for their house this month.

Firstly, well done to Nadia Tarkowska (8L) for putting herself forward as a House photographer, to document the many House activities around the school.

Congratulations also to Sofia Seferi (8C) for coming 2nd in the House Maths Challenge and gaining 20 points for Glastonbury – good work Sofia!

The following pupils have gained the most commendations in the House: Dylan White (7L), Rahul Vital (8L), Iona Anthony (9C), Christian Wood (10L) and Naomi South (11L). A big well done to you all for representing Glastonbury with such pride – keep it up!

Finally, good luck to all those Glastonbury pupils performing in the College production, we all know you will put on a fantastic show.