

1<sup>st</sup> March 2024

Dear Families

We have really started the second half of the Lent Term with a bang this week! There is so much happening. Senior staff have begun meeting Year 8 students and their parents to discuss the first part of their option choices (there are further choices in Year 9). I have met quite a few and it has been a real pleasure. Students have really thought hard about their choices and taken the time to discuss them with their parents. This week we also begin interviews for places in our Sixth Form. Year 10 students have enjoyed a lovely week on retreat at Kintbury and there have been visits for Year 9 students to universities this week.

On Tuesday we took 31 Year 12 and 13 students to MathsFest where they had the excellent opportunity to hear from several mathematicians including Matt Parker, Ben Sparks and Sylvia Butti. Students had a great time and learnt a lot of different applications of Mathematics. Thank you to all who attended.

On Wednesday we held a Year 8 Careers Fair all day in school and this was an excellent opportunity for students and their families to begin to think about potential careers for the future. We were delighted that so many employers gave up their time for this event. We have had such good feedback from students and parents to say how useful they found it. We would like to thank parents who were able to attend.

On Friday Year 12 students had the opportunity to learn about potential careers and university applications.

I hope parents found the two information evenings helpful this week. On Tuesday Year 10 parents were invited to learn more about how we teach Maths at St. Paul's and how they can support their child's learning. On Thursday there was a Year 13 information evening.

On Thursday we welcomed our Local Authority School Improvement Partner to school for the day. This was to conduct our annual Safeguarding Audit and I am pleased to say that it went incredibly well. I am absolutely thrilled with the verbal feedback we received in terms of our practice and the word exemplary was used several times in terms of keeping children safe. We did not receive any specific targets for development. I'm looking forward to receiving the report. Safeguarding is the most important aspect of our school and so the outcomes of this visit are really pleasing. Next week we will welcome them back again for our Local Authority Annual Evaluation on Thursday.

This morning we had a visit from the charity, Medical Detection Dogs, who brought one of their dogs Bobbin with them. Year 8 are fundraising for the charity this Lent and were excited to meet Bobbin. Our visitors commented on how well behaved our students were.

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Congratulations to all those who took part in sporting fixtures this week. We started off with a great result for our U15 girls' football team who played their 2nd round National Cup tie away at Shenley Brook End. The result, 3-2 to St Paul's, made the game seem a lot closer than it actually was and the girls were fantastic playing some nice football in patches. We will be looking for more consistency in our next match. A special mention goes to our captain Poppy McGlue who was exceptional at the heart of our defence, playing alongside two girls who were making their debut for the school team. Well done also to our player of the match Shania Ismail, who listened to instructions, did everything she was asked to do and scored our first goal to get us off the mark. We are the last Milton Keynes school left in the competition and play Sharnbrook Academy from Bedford next Tuesday in the 3rd round. Well done girls and good luck.

This week our Year 8 girls were just as successful with a confident 2-0 win at home against Webber Independent School. Our Year 7 boys also played this week and won 4-2 against Brooklands.

On Tuesday our Year 9 netball team took part in the Milton Keynes tournament where they came up against some very strong schools in their pool. They saved their best performance till last and won against Radcliffe School. Well done to all the team.

Next week is National Careers Week and is dedicated to providing young people with information about their career options and helping them make informed choices about their future. It highlights the importance of high-quality career education and provides opportunities for children and young people to engage with the world of work. BBC bitesize are doing a series of activities to get you thinking about future careers and the right path for you <http://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/careers>. There is also a Parents Guide for 16 - 18 year olds which can be found [here](#).

We are continuing our journey through Lent with the Sacrament of Reconciliation available to students today. There are also lots of activities to raise money for our Lenten Charities. On Monday students and staff can sign up to walk the Stations of the Cross. These are situated throughout our school site.

Next week we have many national events that we are celebrating at school. Firstly, it is British Science Week and the previously mentioned National Careers Week. We will have activities to mark both of these. Then on Thursday, we will mark World Book Day with lots of book related activities, I'm sure there will be some dressing up!

On Tuesday, Year 7 D & T students are visiting The Harry Potter Studios. In the evening parents are invited to the next PTA meeting at 6pm. There is also an information evening for students and parents from Years 9 to 12 to learn about the potential for an expedition to Peru in 2025. On Wednesday Year 7 & 8 students will have the opportunity to listen to the Author Lizzie Waterworth. Year 9s have a careers event on Wednesday and Thursday focused on 'Getting that job!' On Thursday evening Year 12 parents are welcome to attend the next parents' information evening.

Our Politics department are also very active next week. On Tuesday 5th March A level Politics students are encouraging academic political curiosity by continuing their 'Learning Politics with the Sixth Form' series by hosting their 2nd mini-workshop during both lunches. The aim is to teach students about the importance of Super Tuesday in American Politics. This is the day that most states will vote on who they would like to become the presidential nominee for each political party and thus cements who the

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final two candidates will be for the general election in November. This has been offered to Years 7-9 through form group sign up sheets.

On Friday 8th March A Level Politics students will be virtually attending a Learning with the Lords Session with Lord Hakel, who is currently a life peer and the Deputy Speaker of the House of Lords. Students have exclusive access to him and have submitted questions for him to answer. This is a unique opportunity for the students to meet with him and ask him questions about his position in the House of Lords and how he stands on important issues such as immigration. The students are very excited about this event as it allows them to access real power in Parliament and put what they are learning into the context of the real world.

You may be aware that the Local Authority is currently experiencing a Local Area SEND Inspection by both OFSTED and the CQC. St. Paul's is likely to be involved in this due to our provisions in both the Emmaus Department and the Emmanuel Centre, We also manage the LA Sensory Provision which supports children with sensory needs across the whole city. Parents and children have been invited to feedback their views on the whole local system and I hope you managed to do this.

This week we turn to Milton Keynes City Council to shine our Community Support spotlight on their newly launched 'Library of Things'. Residents will be able to borrow DIY items, crafting tools, party kits, sports kits and baby accessories. Just as with the regular book libraries, items are free to borrow and can be taken out for 1-2 weeks at a time. To find out more contact staff at The Frank Moran Centre in Bletchley. This new initiative aims to give support to those in need but also to improve sustainability within our city.

As you can see, there is so much happening at the moment. It's such a short half term but there is so much to fit in!

I hope you have a lovely weekend.

Yours sincerely



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