

16th February 2024

Dear Families

Fr Francis came into school on Wednesday to celebrate Ash Wednesday Mass with us. It was a lovely way to mark the start of Lent. Year groups are busy making plans for their Lenten charity fundraising with this being launched by a non-uniform day yesterday. I know times are difficult for many of our families but please give as generously to these charities as your individual circumstances will allow.

I was thrilled to watch our school production on Wednesday evening. It was superb and a delight to watch. Congratulations to all those talented individuals involved and my thanks go to our wonderful staff for their hard work and dedication.

Well done to all those who have represented the school so well in sporting activities this week. Our Year 11 girls' football team won 4–0 against Radcliffe. Our Year 11, Year 9 and Year 7 girls' netball teams played against Webber Independent School losing 18–5, 11–3 and 6–3. Our Year 7 girls' football team played in the MK tournament at Walton High. Although they didn't make it out of their group they competed well and all enjoyed themselves. Congratulations too to our Year 9 students who helped out in a year 3 and 4 primary school badminton tournament on Wednesday and were amazing. The teachers and parents sang their praises and said they were very polite. They led a warm up and cool down and officiated all the games.

We have also been visited by a family of ducks this week! They are residing in our wellbeing pond and they have caused quite a stir! They are a welcome addition to our Animal Care course at Key Stage 4!

The Student Leaders wrote lovely cards and sent some chocolates to a second grade class in Genoa, Ohio in the USA as part of the Hearts Around the World campaign. The school was trying to see if they could get Valentines from around the USA and the world sent to their classrooms so that they could learn more about other places. The Student Leaders were very happy to oblige and wrote individual cards to each student in the class. They also sent Cadbury chocolates which were very well received. Our leaders further wanted to send information about our school so they were sent the prospectus which the students in Ohio were very impressed with. They have requested a video chat to say thank you personally to our students and have sent a video thank you in the meantime. The Leaders are very pleased to have helped the younger ones learn more about schools in Europe! Valentine's Day is very international indeed!

In January some of our Year 10 Mathematicians took part in the Intermediate UKMT Mathematics Challenge. This is organised to develop and extend the mathematical approach of students and is designed to challenge their thinking from numerous perspectives. We would like to take this opportunity to praise those who took part for their efforts and congratulate those awarded a Gold, Silver or Bronze

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award. In particular we congratulate Franek S who not only achieved a Gold award but has been selected to take part in the next round later this month. Well done all!

Bedfordshire Music Trust is holding a Four Hubs Orchestral Jamboree On March 17<sup>th</sup>. This free music making day is for children who play a string, brass, woodwind or percussion instrument at pre-grade and grade 1. Places can be booked on <https://forms.office.com/e/Ha8sxE2hAU>

We have a busy week when we return from half term on Monday 26<sup>th</sup>. Year 10 students are going on retreat to Kintbury on Monday. Year 11 students have their Sixth Form interviews throughout the week. This will be an opportunity to discuss course choices and how preparation for GCSEs is progressing. On Tuesday evening Year 10 parents are invited to a workshop focusing on Maths. On Wednesday we are hosting a careers fair or our students with 28 employers visiting school to speak to our students. If you wish to join us between 3:35 and 5pm with your child, please give your details [here](#) before Monday 26<sup>th</sup> February. We very much look forward to seeing you on the 28<sup>th</sup> February. Should you have any further questions please contact [susan.kielty@st-pauls.org.uk](mailto:susan.kielty@st-pauls.org.uk)

Year 13 parents are invited to an information evening on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> February. That day we have an external review of our safeguarding procedures conducted by the Local Authority. I have invited them in to provide a weather eye check on our policies and procedures as we are always looking for ways that we can improve our practice. On Friday 1<sup>st</sup> March students and staff have the opportunity to attend the Sacrament of Reconciliation as part of our Lenten reflection.

As we approach any school holiday some members of our community will feel the pressures of the cost of living crisis even more keenly. This week we shine the spotlight on places to eat where children can eat free or at a reduced price when adults eat. The information has been collated by Money Saving Central and is updated regularly so do check before you head out: <https://moneysavingcentral.co.uk/kids-eat-free>. Thank you to those in our community who have already shared recommendations for places of support, please do continue to send them to us.

Next week we will all have a well-deserved rest for half term and I look forward to welcoming your children back to school on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> February.

Have a lovely half term.

Yours sincerely



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Headteacher

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