

2nd February 2024

Dear Families

A massive congratulations to the Year 9 & 10 Girls' football team. On Monday they played against Hazeley in the U15 Girls' National Cup. By all accounts they were brilliant and fully deserved their win. They won 7-2 and have now progressed to the second round of the cup and face Shenley Brook End the week before half term. We are the last two MK Schools left in the competition. I look forward to hearing all about this match.

On the same evening, our Year 11 Boys' football team travelled to Leon School, with a much depleted squad due to a number of injuries. We went there with only 10 players and played the whole game with one less than Leon. Well done to Dylan Sutton who clinched a well deserved 1-0 win with the last kick of the game. Thursday evening saw our Year 10 Boys' football team travel to The Grange School to play in the County Cup Semi Final where, despite the efforts of all those involved, the match finished 2-0 to The Grange. Everyone in the PE department would like to congratulate the boys involved for their achievement in reaching the Semi Final. Well done to all.

On Wednesday 24th January, seven Year 11 and Year 12 student leaders attended the Big Challenge Lunch sponsored by Action 4 Youth. The students participated in a round robin of leadership challenges which helped to polish their teamwork, communication and critical thinking skills. They also learned to work under pressure as there were eight different tasks that had to be organised, led, and performed in under eight minutes. One task asked students to work together to bring a bucket past the line using only rope and hooks, while another challenge asked them to unlock a safe to avoid an explosion. Students competed with other schools from Milton Keynes and Buckingham. It was a very positive and fun experience for the students and after a hard fought battle, it was determined that the schools from Buckingham were victorious. After the competition, students were treated to an awards ceremony where former Cricketer, James Hildreth, spoke to them about leadership in sports and in life. Finally, they were given a lovely lunch before returning to school. It was a great day in the community and Ms. Markatos was very proud of all the contributions that the leaders made. We can't wait for next year!

On Thursday 25th of January, former student, Joanna, came to speak to the A level Politics students about her experiences at Swansea University where she is in her second year of pursuing a degree in American Studies and International Relations. In her talk with the students, Joanna stressed how the education and guidance she received from her Politics teachers has allowed her to become successful at university. She encouraged the students to follow their passions when they are choosing courses at university and to do their due diligence in seeking out the best path forward. Joanna stressed that to be a student of international relations meant thinking critically about problems from everyone's

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perspective and all angles. She encouraged the students to follow politicians and pressure groups on social media to become real scholars of their subject. Joanna also spoke to the students about the many opportunities she has had through her studies including taking trips to America and being President of the American Society at her university. Joanna is hoping to become a diplomat in the future or maybe even a teacher after that. We are very grateful that she has come back to take questions from the students and let them know about her wonderful experiences. She was kind enough to allow the students to contact her with any questions that they may have in the future. We wish her the best of luck and hope that she keeps coming back to update us on her success.

Thank you to the significant amount of parents who came to our parent forum on Tuesday evening. I really appreciate the time they spent considering our current behaviour policy and helping us to shape the policy for the future. We hope to go through this process with more of our whole school policies in the future so do consider signing up to join us next time. There was plenty of cake on offer!

On Tuesday and Wednesday I spent the days at Oakgrove school. I was working with the Headteacher there to deliver two courses, one for aspiring Headteachers and the other for aspiring Senior Leaders. It was a real privilege to work with potential school leaders of the future. I am proud St. Paul's is partnered with Oakgrove in this leadership development programme as it compliments our SCITT provision so well.

Year 13 students finished their PPEs and now await detailed feedback from their teachers. Acting on this feedback will be crucial as we approach the final examinations. We are completing a data capture on Year 11 at the moment so that we can monitor how close they are to achieving their potential in their examinations. This will enable us to target our intervention very specifically in the final weeks that we have left. Year 11 parents had the opportunity to meet with their child's mentors yesterday and can do so again on Monday evening. These meetings are so important in the final push towards GCSEs.

This week Year 9 students enjoyed visits to two universities as part of our programme to raise aspirations and to show students what could be available to them in the future.

Next week we will be marking two important focus weeks with a range of events and activities in school. The first is Children's Mental Health Week which aims to empower, equip and give a voice to every child in the UK. The theme for this year's national awareness week is 'my voice matters', with the aim to provide children with the tools to express themselves. We have planned a number of opportunities throughout the week for all pupils to consider how they talk about themselves and express how they feel.

The second is National Apprenticeship Week. On Friday Year 13 students will have a targeted experience of what Apprenticeships can offer them beyond life at St. Paul's. My youngest son is completing a Degree Level Apprenticeship and I am really convinced that it is an excellent pathway for students.

On Tuesday evening, Year 8 students and their parents are invited to an Options Evening where they can begin the process of selecting courses for GCSE. This evening will provide essential information about the courses that are on offer at St. Paul's and how we provide a broad curriculum offer for our students. The evening will be followed by individual meetings between a senior teacher, parents and

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students to discuss individual option choices. These will take place after half term and parents will be sent the option to sign up for these meetings very soon.

Year 8 & 10 students have 'speed dating' and iWork careers events next week.

As we continue our weekly focus on resources to help those of us in need, we shine a light this week on <https://www.ilovefreegle.org/>. Freegle is a UK organisation that aims to increase reuse and reduce landfill by offering a free Internet-based service where people can give away and ask for things that would otherwise be thrown away. The site regularly has furniture, toys, clothing and white goods on offer and can be of great help for those of us who are finding times difficult. You set up an account and then can offer items for individuals to collect or you can browse items that others are offering.

I will be out of school on Wednesday and Thursday next week as I am completing a Diocesan Inspection of a school. I will still be picking up emails should you require anything.

Finally, please do book tickets to our school production of The Wizard of Oz on Wednesday 14th and Thursday 15th February. I'm really looking forward to seeing the results of all of the hard work of our talented students and staff. Tickets are available via Wisepay.

Have a lovely weekend.

Yours sincerely



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