

26th January 2024

Dear Families

Year 10 Work Experience placements have gone extremely well. I'm delighted to say that 290 children went to work placements this week and initial feedback is that they have done incredibly well. I have spent today emailing parents with such lovely feedback from employers. Many have said that our students were the best work experience students they have ever had! I'm very grateful to staff for completing visits to placements. This is a significant achievement as we have done all of this in-house.

Year 13 students have been completing their PPEs this week and it seems that they have taken them very seriously. I look forward to reviewing their results in the next few weeks.

On Tuesday I welcomed primary headteachers for a Learning Walk around our school. They went to quite a few lessons. Our focus was how we get children to think hard at St. Paul's. They were very impressed by what they saw and they enjoyed seeing some of their former students hard at work! In March we are going to repeat the activity at St. Thomas Aquinas. It is always good to share ideas and resources across our settings.

Yesterday we welcomed governors for a morning visit. Their focus was our provision for SEND and disadvantaged children. Last night governors also met for the Resources and Personnel committee meeting. Today the English Department took GCSE students to Poetry Live. This is an excellent opportunity for students to see their GCSE poems performed live to help them really grasp the meaning.

This morning, Year 12 Politics students, Student Council head representatives, and Student Leaders met with local MP Iain Stewart. Mr Stewart began by explaining to the students what MPs do and what their role is in the legislature. He then fielded questions from 62 students in Year 7 to Year 12. Some of the questions were "What's the biggest project that you have worked on to help Milton Keynes?" and "If you are re-elected, what do you think you can do for Milton Keynes?". Mr Stewart was very impressed with the quality of the questions the students asked as well as their awareness of world events and local concerns. He discussed the ongoing situations in Ukraine and Gaza with the students as well as local knife crime and the cost of living crisis. The students were so pleased to be speaking to him, they walked him back to reception and asked questions all the way there. We are very proud of all of our students who attended and spoke so eloquently to their MP.

Next Week we have our first parent forum of this calendar year. The focus is a change to the published topic as we require support from parents for a new piece of work that we are beginning. We are about to do a thorough review of our school behaviour policy as it has been fairly consistent for about 10

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years. We would really like to hear parent views about this as part of this process. Please consider joining us at the forum next Tuesday so that we can discuss the issues and listen to your views. Refreshments will be provided. Please sign up via this link <https://forms.office.com/e/P91ZyYph66>.

Year 13 PPEs continue next week and on Wednesday and Thursday Year 9 students have the opportunity to take part in university visits to Bucks New University and the University of Bedford. On Thursday (and Monday 5th February) Year 11 have their final mentoring meetings of the academic year. This is an important opportunity to discuss final preparations for the GCSE and vocational examinations that begin in May. On Saturday 3rd February Year 10 will have their Silver DofE campcraft day.

In other notices, foodbank collections next week are from all Kolbe forms so please give generously if you are able to. Congratulations to all students who represented the school in sporting activities this week. We had two netball fixtures away at Sir Herbert Leon with Year 7 winning 3-0 and Year 8 winning 8-3.

You will have begun to see our school play being advertised on social media. The Wizard of Oz will be performed on the 14th and 15th February. Please do come along and experience the wonderful talent of our students. Tickets can be booked on WisePay.

We have two STEM trips coming up in the next couple of weeks to Bletchley Park and the Girls in Science conference at Unity Place. Keep an eye out on our social media platforms for updates on these two exciting events. If you are in Year 11/12/13 and interested in learning about different roles and the business structure at Apple there is a Spotlight Careers Talk next Wednesday (31 January) from 8.40am to 9.00am. Please send Mr Ruprai a message on itslearning to register your interest.

If your child is completing Doodle assignments in class, you might have heard that they are taking part in the exciting Doodle Back-to School Competition! The competition runs until 2nd February and is a great way to get your child into the habit of Doodling regularly. Your child's class could also be in with a chance of winning some great prizes!

There will also be eight runners-up prizes, each worth £25! These will be awarded to the classes with the next highest percentage of pupils on target in DoodleMaths or DoodleTables. Students will be able to earn an in-app badge for reaching their target - it will automatically unlock if they are in the green zone at midnight on both the 26th January and the 2nd of February. Please encourage your child to Doodle little and often to stay in the green zone. The results will be shared with the school after 2nd February. Good luck and happy Doodling!

As a Catholic school one of our most fundamental values and missions is to support those who are vulnerable in whatever ways we can; at St Paul's we want to ensure that we do this for our pupils and their families, our staff and our wider community. In the current economic climate more and more of us are feeling vulnerable and are in need of support and it is more important than ever that we all seek support, but also take advantage of assistance when it is available. As part of our ongoing work in this area we will be highlighting a resource or opportunity that may help some of our

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community. We will share this each week in the headteacher's weekly letter, through our social media posts and on our school website.

To begin our programme we would like to highlight the NHS's Healthy Start scheme. If you're more than 10 weeks pregnant or have a child under four, you may be entitled to get help to buy healthy food and milk. If you're eligible, you'll be sent a Healthy Start card with money on it that you can use in some UK shops. To find out more about this service please follow the link:

<https://www.healthystart.nhs.uk/> If you know of an initiative or resource that you feel would benefit others please do contact us and let us know.

Finally, please can I ask all parents to be particularly careful when driving through our car park. Please drive slowly and look out for pedestrians.

Have a lovely weekend.

Yours sincerely



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