

VERITAS



St Mark's Catholic School

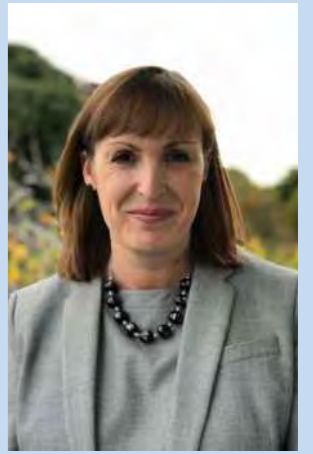
No. 29 - AUTUMN 2022





On Monday 18th July St Mark's held a Cultural Day to celebrate the diversity of our school community. It was a non-uniform day so that students and staff who wished to could wear clothes that reflect their cultural heritage or the colour of the flag they most associate with. Due to the heatwave the Cultural Showcase had to be postponed, but the timetable was suspended for KS3 students so they could see some of the students perform poetry, songs and dances that reflected their heritage.

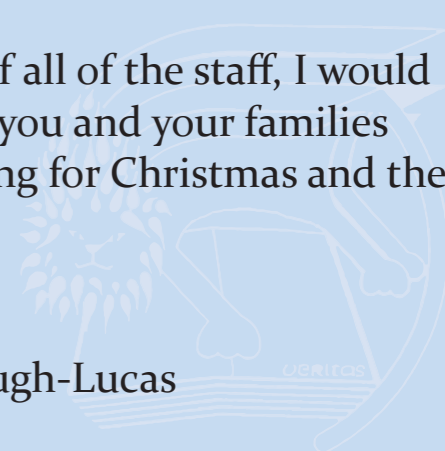
In November we were able to invite families to come and see the Cultural Showcase and we are very grateful to all students who performed - showcasing dances, songs, music and poetry from Egypt, Ghana, India, Ireland, Nigeria, the Philippines. A huge thank you to former student Dr. Sharon James for coming and dancing with her sister.



This has been a wonderful term and there has been so much to celebrate. The Ofsted inspectors in September witnessed so many examples of everyday excellence at St. Mark's, and we were delighted to achieve 'outstanding' in every category. The inspectors recognised our strong emphasis on 'developing pupils beyond the academic' and they commented that 'pupils' wider development runs through all aspects of school life'. Each edition of Veritas contains so many examples of the wide range additional opportunities and activities that are available to our pupils beyond the classroom. These are such an integral part of our vision to ensure that all members of our community fulfil their God-given potential and develop such a wide range of skills and talents. In this edition you will also read about the success of our pupils in sports, public speaking and in careers. We are very proud of all that they have achieved.

On behalf of all of the staff, I would like to wish you and your families every blessing for Christmas and the New Year.

Andrea Waugh-Lucas



Year 7 Christmas Fete

On Friday 2nd December, as part of our Faith In Action lesson, the Year 12s entertained and hosted the entire Year 7 year group in the main hall with a Christmas Fete. Through this, the Year 7s could take part in fun Christmas games, competitions, quizzes and puzzles, in which the Year 7s had the privilege of winning sweets! They were also able to create Christmas cards and decorations to take home, getting themselves into the festive spirit! We are delighted by the overwhelmingly positive response from the Year 7s and the opportunity to organise this event for them. We wish them Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

By
Eleneuio F and Salah G
(year 12)



Rotary
Hounslow



It's that time of the year again where the Rotarians call for the voices of the future to express themselves at the Rotary Public Speaking Competition. With a great history in the competition, St. Mark's, of course, fielded three strong teams across the intermediate and senior

levels looking to make our mark in the world of Public Speaking once again. At the Intermediate level, again St. Mark's enjoyed immense success, yet the competition was fierce. Not only did we have to contend with the exceptional standard of speakers from across Hounslow Schools but also against each other, as we entered two teams! Team A was made up of Hanna Paluch, Rhys

Mallari and Katherine Dibley, delivering professionalism, wonderful rhetoric and charisma...in that order. Team B consisted of Rhia Fernandes, Porshia Fernando and Niamh Smith – this team demonstrating intelligent sarcasm, welcomed controversy and beautifully articulated attitude...in that order. It was the Clash of the Titans – perfectionism vs passion, and the real winners were the

audience, privileged to witness such a display of oratory ability, intellect and forward thinking. In the end it was Team A who qualified to the District Semi-Finals, but Team B managed to win all the individual awards!

Our Senior teams were made up of Joyce Bitumba, Zofia Straczek and Andreas Pereira – returning to the competition having won the Intermediate level last year. Here, they came to test themselves at the more challenging Senior level, delivering their speech questioning whether the ends justify the means.

An enticing topic with Zofia's

beautifully written speech and powerful emotion, sandwiched by Andreas's audacious and energised counter and Joyce's inspiring conclusion. While small in stature, this team certainly showed they were big in character and voice, winning all available accolades and moving on to the regional finals in early 2022.



All students who competed (and won) have been taking part in the Aiming for Oxbridge programme over the past two years and it is becoming increasingly evident that they are growing into world beaters! We look forward to seeing where this ambition takes them over the next few years! (If you're looking to join the Debating Club, come to Room 205 on Thursdays after school)

Hounslow Senior Champions: Joyce Bitumba, Zofia Straczek and Andreas Pereira

Hounslow Intermediate Champions: Hanna Paluch, Katherine Dibley, Rhys Mallari

Best Chairperson: Rhia Fernandes

Best Proposer: Porshia Fernando

Best Opposer: Niamh Smith



SENIOR CITIZENS CHRISTMAS PARTY

After being unable to host such an event for the past three years, on Wednesday 7th December, Year 12 were able to host the Senior Citizens Party once again as part of our Faith In Action lesson. Finally being able to hold the occasion again was an amazing experience. The gesture of the Christmas party that the Faith In Action group did out of pure kindness really warmed up the atmosphere for the care homes and senior citizens. The afternoon was filled with activities such as a Christmas sing-a-long, a game of Bingo and a raffle draw, and ended with a little dance party in the middle of the room with the seniors. I had a very heartwarming experience with one senior in particular where, at the end of the night, I handed over to her a handmade Christmas card. She gave me the biggest hug and thanked me for keeping her company. It's an experience I'll never forget and I am entirely grateful to be a part of it.

By Riyana M



MIDNIGHT NIGHTMARE SCARE

by Phoebe Lawrence

The moonlit night, intruding fog,
The voice screeches out from the bog.
It doesn't seem to go away,
It never has, it always stays.
Every Night on Hallow's Eve,
You always hear its cries and screams.
When the grand clock strikes the 12,
Each house gets a candle on their shelf.
And when that candle soon burns out,
The house is filled with dread and doubt.
The strange mystery of the night,
Fills the villagers all with fright.

Bats awaken, the mist appears,
As the crawlers bring all the fears.
The crawlers, the undead beasts,
Enjoys children for their midnight feast.
A dark hood conceals their faces,
As they wander around these gloomy places.
These shadow-like, stealthy brutes,
Inches to their victim - then it shoots.
It consumes their thoughts and their mind,
And then leaves them for us to find.
Their wisp of dark and longing dread,
Leaves children shivering in bed.

Strange cackles heard in the distance,
The witches and their assistants.
The pointed hat and warty nose,
Their trusty broom and ragged clothes.
The moon comes up, they climb aboard,
With cauldrons, where potions are stored.
They all search and plunder each house,
To find the children with-
out a doubt.
The only thing that keeps
them aside,
Is the salt found small and
dry.
So when your house is
messed up too,
Keep in mind, they are
looking for you.



Children in spooky costumes everywhere,
Chilly October air,
Trick or Treat?
Chocolate on my lips,
Holding my brothers hand tight
So that we won't spook out.

Walking to the creepy garden,
I spy a yummy sweet,
Here is Halloween again,
Knock-knock - Trick or Treat?



SPOOKY POEMS FOR HALLOWEEN



IT'S HALLOWEEN

by Jeanine Dias

The eerie moon fills the sky
Wicked witches fly by
Ghosts and zombies skeletons too
Haunting petrifying and waiting for you
Black cats guard the graveyard plots
Witches cook feasts in cauldron pots
Cemetery souls roam the ground
Not one unopened grave is found
Toombstones are an eerie sight
Shadows dance in the full moon light
There's a haunted house on a hill
Walk to it you'll get a chill
Jack O'Lanterns eyes so bright
Trick or treaters scream in fright
Witches wail and werewolves howl
Ghosts say boo and monsters scowl
Jack O'Lanterns grin all night
As children shiver with delight
It's a time like you've never seen
Citizens it's Halloween!

Flutter, flutter brave bats,
I wonder where you are yet,
You know you can flugh through the dark
night,
You can find your way without a light

The skeleton are out tonight,
They march through the street,
With their bony bodies,
In the spooky night.

Disembodied Voices by Melissa Rodrigues

**It's hard to trust
When I'm told it's gonna hurt
When you're promised what you fear
When the end feels oh so near**

**The future set in stone
You won't know what is gone
You will see your name
You've gained no fame
And it's quite past curtain call**

**Voices in your head
Lull you off to bed**

**Promises make you shiver
No weapons but an empty quiver**

**In your toil and tumble
Your problems seem to double
You feel the urge to listen
You felt the want for change
When voices can be heard
They are in shooting range!**



Undoli by Alinden Nunes

Undoli is a special creature,
It scares its prey with a special feature.
In the night at its home dimension,
Every living there will scare you to suffocation.

As small as it may look, their teeth are sharp.
Their screeches sound like a dreadful harp.
Don't be fooled by their eyes; they're not blind,
In an eerie forest is where the Undoli you find.

One stare at it will turn you to stone,
They will eat you even your bones.
This is a creature might,
Because it has a strong bite.

It's almost a skin walker to be exact,
Sharp teeth and speed are some facts.
The place it originates from is scerpentiery,
All who resides there terrify me.

The purple flames touch even the sky,
And all that follows are those creepy red eyes!
In this world you will run for hours,
Only to find dead leaves and carnivorous flowers.

Truly I tell you if you make it to the bottom,
You will soon be forgotten.
For you will soon be dead,
And to the Undoli you will be fed!

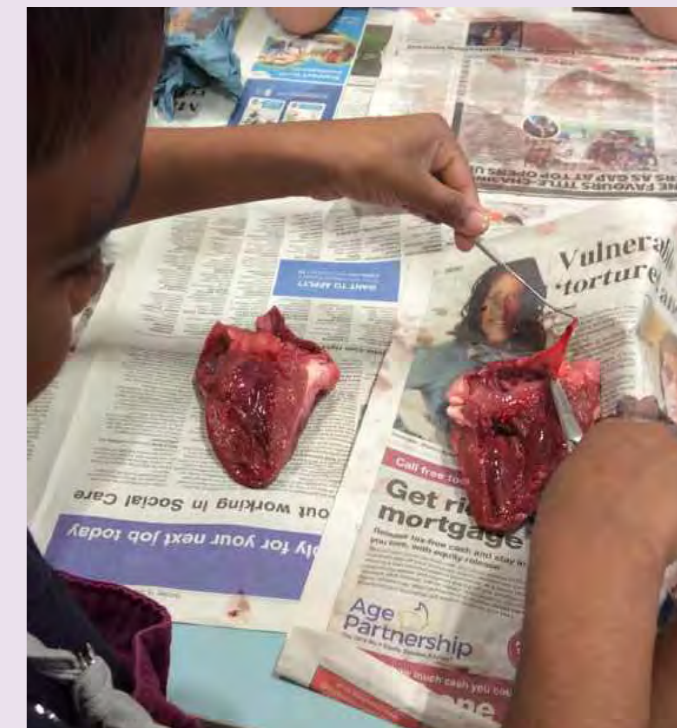


& Juliet



On Friday 25th March 2022, my classmates and I took the train to Shaftesbury theatre to watch the musical '& Juliet' directed by Luke Sheppard. As we were on our journey, many opinions were voiced concerning the possibility that the musical wasn't going to live up to our high expectations but my class and I were gravely mistaken. The musical '& Juliet' was absolutely phenomenal and flew past our high expectations. We were all blown away by the amazing acting and singing. A key moment in the performance for me was at the beginning of the musical when Ann Hathaway, William Shakespeare's wife, took it upon herself to rewrite Shakespeare's play and stop the death of Juliet. The song 'I want it that way' by Backstreet Boys was used and it was really humorous for the audience to see the comedic conflict between Shakespeare and Hathaway. Another key moment for me was when Romeo and Juliet were on the swing together. The swing progressively went higher and higher until they reached the top where they sang their hearts out and had their well-deserved moment of closure with each other. To add to this incredibly emotion filled scene, the lighting created a star-like gaze that amazed everyone including me. Another key moment that stood out to me was when Juliet came to the realisation that she was better off without Romeo and finally had her moment of women empowerment. The lighting was a bright and powerful red while the stage lifted up to draw the focus on Juliet. Moreover, the dancing was hip-hop and really created a positive and energetic aura and if I remember correctly, I was also on my feet dancing. In my opinion, the whole of '& Juliet' was absolutely astounding but if I had to choose just one moment it would have to be the end scene in which Juliet is proudly singing 'Roar' by Katy Perry. During this song there was a breathtaking costume change, while the lights were flashing spontaneously and golden confetti fell from the sky; it was truly enchanting and deserves nothing less than a 10/10. I immensely enjoyed my experience at the Shaftesbury theatre and hope to continue going on more marvellous theatre trips.

Gizelle Furtado



The Science department at St Mark's went into Botwell House Primary School to help them with their circulatory system topic. We brought over some of our resources to help the Year 6 students with their understanding, and modelled an entire circulatory system as red blood cells. The day was capped off with a heart dissection, where all the students had a go at dissecting a whole sheep heart. It's always a pleasure to go out to some of our Primary partner school, and I was so impressed with the Year 6 class' attention and enthusiasm! Always nice to spot a few siblings from St Mark's as well!



**The SCIENCE DEPT
SHOW BOTWELL
HEART! 🤝**

On Wednesday the 9th of November me, my class, and the year 13 government and politics class took a trip to the Houses of Parliament in Westminster for an exclusive tour and workshop in the heart of UK politics. When we arrived, we were taken through rigorous security checks, dropped off our bags, picked up a headset, a visitor pass and off we went! Our tour guide first took us to Westminster Hall, commonly known for the Queen's lying-in state. Many other events have and are still held here. For example, the lying-in state of King George VI and Winston Churchill. It is an incredible part of British history. The Houses of Parliament are often referred to as 'The Palace of Westminster' because King Henry VIII used it as a palace. He took a liking to Westminster Hall and did many things here such as holding banquets, balls, playing tennis and even jousting. One couldn't help to think that jousting in this room would be a dodgy job, with hard rock floor it wouldn't be a nice landing! The floor is estimated to be 1000 years old and the roof at 800 years. After our short trip to the hall, we headed through to the lobby where many news outlets record interviews and protests take place, which is perfectly legal! After this, we were taken to the gallery of the House of Commons where we sat and watched UK politics in action. There were not many MPs sitting as PMQs were over and it was the turn of the back benchers. We listened to a Labour MP talking about the human rights of Sri Lanka and managed to hear a few words from the MP of Hayes and Harlington in the chamber. Steaming forward, we left the gallery leaving journalists to work away and headed back through the lobby directly opposite to The House of Lords. At first, we were told we could not go into the chamber of the Lords as it was too busy with other tours. However, when all hope was lost a security guard opened the ginormous wooden door and said "you guys can head in for five minutes if you wish" up I jumped in joy and off we went. The Lords and Baronesses were in a recess, so the chamber was completely empty. Our tour guide enlightened us on who sits where and what goes on. We also were able to see the throne in which the late Queen Elizabeth II sat during the state opening of parliament. Unfortunately, before we knew it, our tour had come to a close and we headed back to the education centre for our thrilling workshop on law making and debating. When we arrived, the group had split themselves in the makeshift 'Houses of Commons' into year 12 vs year 13. Two leaders were elected. Myself for the 'blue' party and Nathan Bowman for the 'red' party. If you haven't guessed these were replicating the Conservative and Labour party. My party was in office, and so I had become Prime Minister! We had voted to bring through the bill of re-introducing the death penalty. And so, without further ado, we took to the floor of our makeshift chamber. Lily Doran was our Madame deputy speaker keeping law and order and arguments were fired across each side like a political battlefield. With each side bellowing "HERE HERE" OR "NAY, SHAME" the points of our competition were piling up. In light of this fiery debate, we had a final vote, and my party were victorious! We had got the bill through! However, with great victory must come great loss and we had lost out to winning the point competition by one point to the year thirteens with a final score of 48-49. With that, our glorious day in Parliament had drawn to a close. It was an incredible experience and was mesmerising to be in the heart of the UK politics when it is in full swing. I know for myself; it has fuelled my passion for politics 100 times more and I am now seriously considering a career in British Politics. On behalf of the Year 12 and Year 13 class I would like to express our gratitude and thanks to Ms. Brown and Ms. Mitchell for organising the trip and giving us this opportunity!



Written by Zygy Lopez-Dyrka



On the 28th of September, the Year 13 Spanish class travelled to Riverside Studios in Hammersmith to watch 'Maixabel', a film about ETA (Basque terrorist group). The director of the film, Icíar Bollain, was there to do a Q+A. Despite a slight setback getting in, we eventually took our seats and settled in for the start.

Synopsis

The film tells the story of Maixabel Laso, whose husband is killed by three members of the terrorist group ETA, who wish to separate the Basque Country from Spain. 11 years on from her loss, she is asked by one of the assassins to participate in a new programme implemented by the prison, with the aim of bringing closure to both parties through a conversation. Depicting the struggles of both Maixabel, her daughter and the the assassins, the film gives multiple perspectives about the reasons behind the cold-blooded assassinations by ETA and the devastating effect it has on those left behind.

Opinión

The film made us not only think about the detrimental effects on the families of the victims but also on those who carried out the assassinations. By enabling us to look at it from a different point of view, we were able to understand the situation with little knowledge beforehand. The film was very moving and tackled very deep topics in a very respectful manner. In the Q&A, we later learned that Maixabel, the woman who the film is based around, was closely involved in the process and always ready to answer any questions the director had. This made the film much more touching and hard-hitting as it broke the fourth wall.

Conclusion

Overall, the experience was very enjoyable and allowed our Year 13 Spanish class to learn about our course in a different format and also familiarise ourselves with a new topic.

Katy and Ella 13D/SP1

Spanish Film Trip



Aiming for Oxbridge - Year 8 and Year 9

Aiming for Oxbridge returned this year with a bang! Students in Year 8 and 9 went through a rigorous application process to be whittled down to the lucky few lucky enough to get on the programme.

The programme allows students to learn skills and explore topics that can help with interviews for some of the top universities in the world. From problem solving to oracy and public speaking, Aiming for Oxbridge teaches a variety of skills and studies new topics every lesson from debating and speech writing to business, entrepreneur skills and classical studies. Aiming for Oxbridge allows you to think more critically. Students don't just learn new skills but also new cultures.

This year, sessions have been based around:

- Introduction to Law: Defining Murder (Mr Sheehan)
- Big Questions: Answering university interview style questions (Mr Windmill)
- Forgotten Histories (Mr Longuehaye)
- Global Trading (Mr Shore)
- Superpowers and Geopolitics (Ms Croft)

Next term, the Year 8 students will move on to their focus on Problem Solving while the Year 9s move on to the highly anticipated The Apprentice competition. Who will be crowned this year's The St. Mark's Apprentice?

LAMDA

The London Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts is a world-renowned exam awarding body which specialises in the transformative power of the dramatic arts. The qualifications it offers specialises in training students in their performance and public speaking skills promoting creative, authentic and confident communication. While LAMDA exams cover a range of

disciplines, we at St. Mark's currently offers the qualification in: Speaking in Public.

For the past 12 months, students now in Year 11 have been training intensely for their qualification. Whilst having weekly sessions, as part of the programme students also had to contribute to the wider life of the school such as assemblies, mentoring, form time activities where they are encouraged to apply their learning across the wider school setting.

On December 10th, 20 Year 11 students took their final exam and performed exceptionally. The examiners were in awe of their passion, drive and authenticity in their speech writing and performance. We eagerly await the results which should be with us in late January. Congratulations to the following students who performed so well:

Eugenie Linhinya - Kieron Rose - Ellaina Somasekaram - Natalia Turek - Harrison Clarke - Massimo Cruz - Emma Nagle - Cara Stanislaus - Joancia Colaco - Sheniz Kariyawasam - Adam Mascarenhas - Diyara Seneviratne - Valentina Barbosa De Saldanha E Silva - Natalia Bujak - Shawn Dsouza - Edric Ignacio - Claudia Puchyr - Alicja Rzepinska - Rihanna Mae Del Rosario - Julian Piotrowski

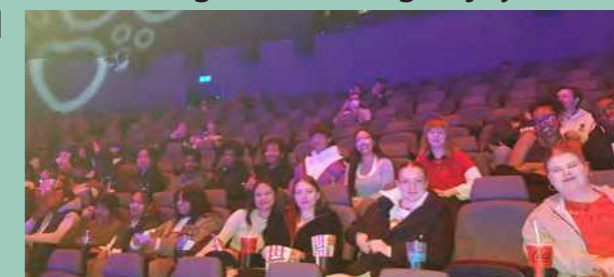


On Wednesday 16th November, the Year 13 film and media students went to the IMAX Cinema in Waterloo to see the new sequel to Black Panther (Wakanda Forever). Apart from being huge Marvel fans, students could use this



trip to expand their knowledge of the Marvel franchise and consider how contexts have influenced production, distribution, marketing and exhibition of the movie. The idea

for the trip was suggested by one of our students, and has been a significant help in aiding discussions leading up to mock exams after Christmas! It was a great evening enjoyed by all and a well-deserved treat for Year 13 after working so hard on their creative coursework pieces.



Pearl had taken part in Spark!'s Connect Mentoring programme, whilst in Year 12 and made great use of the opportunity. Pearl also secured a work experience placement, through Spark!, at the end of the summer term This was in Greenwich with a company called BPTW – despite it being a huge commute, Pearl made a great success of it and got fabulous feedback.

Spark! have now made her one of their student Ambassadors.

Pearl received the Young Person of the Year Award at the recent Spark! Awards.



CONGRATULATIONS PEARL!!





Students in years 7, 8, 9 and 10 have been working hard on Bedrock Learning this term! Bedrock is an online platform designed to help students improve their reading ability and expand their vocabulary. Pupils are able to complete this independently as Bedrock

explains the tasks and provides immediate feedback. Students in year 7 and 8 complete Bedrock tasks in their reading lessons and for homework each week. Students in year 9 and 10 complete Bedrock tasks for homework each week.

Research has shown a direct link between reading ability and academic success so we're delighted to see so many pupils putting so much effort into Bedrock. We've already seen some incredibly impressive, rapid progress made by lots of pupils!

The pupils below are some of those who have benefitted most from using Bedrock so far, congratulations to them all!

Year 7

Top 5 Progress

1. Simeon Andorful 300%
2. Natalia Wojcik 226%
3. Dunmolaoluwa Ojo 205%
4. Flana Dias 102%
5. Juvela Do Rego 100%

Year 8

Top 5 Progress

1. Oskar Nowak 1220%
2. Wayne Rodrigues 901%
3. Leo Preknicaaj 755%
4. Maryvonne Simon 745%
5. Luke Donnelly 732%

Year 9

Top 5 Progress

1. Jazael Albuquerque 299%
2. Kane Lopes 297%
3. Lionel De Souza 185%
4. Nigel Gonsalves 185%
5. Jaden Fernandes 180%

Year 10

Top 5 Progress

1. Vinnie Owens 450%
2. Adam Elliott 316%
3. Marcelino Simon 306%
4. Maxime Yazdanbakhsh-Gola 186%
5. Renee Hutton 157%

Year 7

Top 5 points

1. Shabeen Suthakaran 1730
2. Olivia Szmyd 1531
3. Rishon Pereira 1524
4. Shorena Herazo Rodrigues 1523
5. Onyinye Okani 1485

Year 8

Top 5 points

1. Bartlomiej Szubski 2481
2. Phoebe Lawrence 2468
3. Arshman Mohammed 2092
4. Aden D'Souza 1703
5. Abronah Fernandes 1495

Year 9

Top 5 points

1. Shaun Rodrigues 2502
2. Darius Dias 1796
3. Fiomica Fernandes 1445
4. Crisbon Miranda 843
5. Lysander Fernandes 630

Year 10

Top 5 points

1. Shamiksha Suthakaran 607
2. Nerissa Barreto 522
3. Noel Nelson 513
4. Aneira Fernandes 503
5. Sarah Amadoru 490



We were delighted to host our first parent webinar on the evening of November 10th.

The Daniel Spargo-Mabbs Foundation is a drug and alcohol

education charity that aims to support young people, and their parents, to make safe choices about drugs and alcohol and to reduce the harm. The Foundation was set up in January 2014 by Tim and Fiona Spargo-Mabbs in response to the death of their 16 year old son Daniel after taking ecstasy.

The interactive webinar provided incredibly helpful information for parents and carers so that they can become more aware of the issues their children face. It also offered guidance on what parents/carers can do to help their children stay safe and how to go about those important conversations at home that can sometimes be difficult to navigate. There was also an opportunity for parents to ask questions and to receive further information on next steps and where else to look for guidance.

Feedback from the evening was resoundingly positive, with parents commenting on how helpful and insightful the event was. A recording has since been sent home to all parents so it is available to watch at any time.

We hope to be able to offer further webinars and workshops in the future, around a range of issues that affect young people.

<https://www.dsmfoundation.org.uk/>



The school has been fortunate enough to be involved with the Jack Petchey Foundation for several years now and we continue to see the incredible impact it has on our students and the school community. The Foundation was set up by Sir Jack Petchey to inspire and motivate young people across London and Essex to do their best and to reach their full potential. Throughout the year, staff are given the opportunity to nominate students who they believe to be deserving of the Jack Petchey Award, a prize that now

carries a £300 reward. The nominations must be focused on things beyond the academic, so the prize focuses on students who contribute well to the wider life of the school, participate in extracurricular activities, demonstrate leadership in school and a wide range of other reasons. Over the last few months, prize money has been spent on trips to the theatre, new and exciting books for the LRC, resources for science lessons, D of E resources, drama staging equipment and badges for the liturgy choir. It is always very difficult to choose who to give the award to as our students are so impressive in so many ways.

YEAR 11 - CAREERS DAYS

At the very end of Year 10, in July 2022, our present Year 11 students were off timetable for two Careers Days. Day 1 included presentations from:

Lisa Slade, Managing Director, Accenture.

Annice Abanda, ASK adviser, Apprenticeships

Teyah Davis, Technology Degree Apprentice, Accenture

Richard Fisher, Schools Partnership Coordinator, South Thames Colleges

Astrid Ley, Enterprise Coordinator, West London Careers Hub

Richard's presentation informed students about the alternative pathways to the A Levels we offer in the Sixth Form at St Mark's. He explained BTECs and the vocational routes that Colleges, like Kingston, offer.



Astrid spoke about the advantages that can come from pursuing careers that embrace global mobility and relocation opportunities.



Lisa is a Managing Director at Accenture. Highly enthusiastic and driven Lisa shared her video that charts her unconventional and inspirational route to the position she now holds in the company Accenture. Her story is inspirational and demonstrates the importance of resilience.

Teyah is an Apprentice with Accenture (degree apprenticeship) and spoke about the advantages and challenges of working and studying at the same time.. She engaged students with an interactive presentation that involved problem solving. In student evaluations students praised Teyah's 'passion' for the career opportunities she is taking and her enthusiasm and they really enjoyed the challenges she set them.



Day 2: Careers Speed Networking



The educational charity Spark! Work in partnership with schools to enhance young people's employability skills, knowledge and experience so that they are better prepared for the transition into the workplace. They brought volunteers from a number of sectors including: construction, legal, healthcare, IT and Tech, travel and tourism, property and public services into school. Students could meet with them, listen to their knowledge and experience and ask questions.

Since the covid pandemic it has become increasingly difficult to secure work experience for students. We are grateful to Spark! who assist us in finding suitable work experience opportunities that we can offer to students. If any parents, guardians, family members or former students work for companies that could offer work experience to our Year 10 or Year 12 students - please do get in touch.

Eight Year 10 students were able to go on work experience at the start of November. In addition three of our students students were able to secure a place on an Insight Day at Sky Studios.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Danielle had work experience with Abstract House in Isleworth.

' I gained graphic design and marketing skills, and I had insights into working in a small business. During the work experience, I really enjoyed creating infographics, posters and working on presentations. I also enjoyed working with with my employers as they showed me the ropes of everything.'



Rahul had work experience with Runway Cycling



'I learned how to fix and build bikes as well as how to use the various tools. I really enjoyed fixing the bikes used by the London Ambulance Service. '

Dominika had work experience with Crane Park Nursery.

During my week of Work Experience I gained communication, leadership and teamwork skills. Even though, I didn't know any of the staff or children before starting, I felt I was able to communicate well with them and create a good relationship with many of the children. By the end of my week, the children listened to me, trusted me and enjoyed their time with me. I really appreciated how welcoming everyone at Crane Park Nursery was and how talkative every single child was - not one of them was scared about meeting a new person ! This made this my experience even more fun and entertaining. It definitely wasn't easy but by the end I realised I had experienced something that I will remember for a long time.'

Jamie had work experience with Kinderroos Nursery.

'I developed patience when dealing with young children as well as a deeper understanding of how and why children behave. I enjoyed being able to spend one on one time with the children and experiencing what life is truly like outside of school.'

Jack Petchey's "SPEAK OUT" Challenge!

The Jack Petchey Speak Out Challenge was a fantastic opportunity for many in Year 10 to speak their minds and to articulate issues or things they were passionate about, in a 2 minute speech by the end of the day.



During the day we explored many skills that young people need and that they will benefit from, when going into different careers in the near future and into the workplace. For example, we developed our oracy skills and the ability to speak and present to an audience. We learnt the key techniques needed, such as making good eye contact with the audience and using rhetorical questions and facts or statistics

to hook the audience and engage them. We also developed our written skills to plan and organise our speech but then deliver the speech without the use of any prompts. This was a challenge but everyone who took part did this well and we were all successful.

The improvement of teamwork in this workshop has not only introduced us to new groups of people, but has additionally aided us in articulating our ideas and helping us to integrate them with other people's. Both workshop leaders were really good; so kind and very welcoming and I particularly learnt a lot from my workshop leader.



By taking part I gained better knowledge about the effectiveness of body language when delivering to an audience, and I will make sure to take all lessons learnt into new experiences. Initially, the thought of standing up in front of my peers and giving a 2 minute speech, was daunting. However, by the end of the day we had all grown in confidence and we all achieved it! I am looking forward to seeing where this takes me next. I think taking part was really worthwhile and I would recommend it to other students.

Congratulations to the following students who were the speak out winners on the day:

- Ritvik Afonso
- Aaron Jobin
- Jayden Shaymelo
- Angel Fernandes
- Gabriella Dobrzanska
- Dianne Carino





A couple of weeks ago we had the wonderful opportunity to welcome Dr Sharon James back to St Mark's for the Life After St Mark's talk during which she elegantly described what it means to be a doctor.

It was intriguing to learn that she had studied in Bulgaria and the opportunities she had gained from that experience. I know that a lot of people, including myself, personally took inspiration from her speech and am further inspired to follow the path of medicine. We are extremely grateful that she was able to make the talk and I know that she will have a lasting impact on the audience.



By Kacper Zwirecki 12 Maple

Life after St Mark's

At the 'Life After St Mark's' talk, we had a second guest speaker, Miss Angela Plessas. It was so interesting listening to her life story from St



Mark's to studying for a degree in sociology. Angela said that she went abroad to study a language after her undergraduate sociology degree and she came back to the UK to do a Masters followed by a PhD in sociology. It was very motivating to see her passion for sociology and it was inspiring to hear how she used

opportunities both inside and outside of her degree to get to where she is now.

By Sahasra Bolishetti



St Mark's Catholic School has given all the Year 8 students a book called "The Goldfish Boy". Every week, Year 8 are told to read a select amount of chapters. This is all organised by the Head Of Year; Ms Ryan.

On Fridays, during form time, Year 8s have a Goldfish Boy quiz for the chapter/s that they were told to read. Sometimes, a riddle is given out and you have to figure out where the "Golden Ticket" is. It's normally given to a teacher and you have to get it from them. However, you must know what happened in the chapter that was set at the end of the form time. Many Year 8s get involved in this event and always try to find it first.

Overall, the book is about a Boy who has an obsession for keeping everything clean. It's as if he feels that all the germs will gobble him up. That's why he stays in his room all the time and doesn't want to interact with people at all.

He is given the name " The Goldfish Boy " because of a child tapping on his wall, in his bedroom, saying "Are you there, Goldfish Boy? Are you back in your tank?" The book tells us it's Casey. Mr Charles' granddaughter.

Year 8s find this book quite nice to read in their spare time and during their reading lessons. This story is about finding friendship when you're lonely - and hope when all you feel is fear.

By Oliver L, Quentin B and David T (8 Becket)



Thank you for supporting our soup lunch. We raised £486.92 for CAFOD!





The world renowned coffee morning took place at St Mark's Catholic school on Monday 3rd of October, with the help of the year 13 charity reps. Year 13 charity reps gave up a few of their lunchtimes to sell homemade cakes and savouries. Manjot Hira, the regional fundraising manager, made a special visit to our school and witnessed for herself the fundraising events that took place. On a serious note quite a few staff members spoke to Manjot about their own concerns and worries about cancer. Overall this fundraising event was a huge success and a total of £403.88 was raised for Macmillan to help people who are living with Cancer.



Year 8 Zoo Trip



On 21st July 2022, a few days before the summer holidays, Year 7 had the great opportunity to go on a fantastic and exciting trip to Whipsnade Zoo to finish off the successful academic year. We enjoyed learning about local and exotic wildlife while also having fun playing in the park and exploring the site. In our separate groups, we headed off, venturing for all sorts of animals including rhinos, giraffes, fabulous flamingos and some curious emus. Each group went on



an interesting adventure whether they went to see the lions or venture inside the aquarium. After hours of exciting events, it was finally lunch time where we enjoyed our packed lunches before heading into the nearby park to play - even some of the teachers



decided to get involved in the fun. Once the excitement was over, we were off again, seeing elephants (not staying there too long due to the pungent smell), tigers, frogs, and the occasional patagonian mara wandering around. Our final stop was the gift shop where students who brought money with them were able to purchase souvenirs. After a long and tiring day away from school, we headed back, satisfied with our amazing experience.



Written by Phoebe Lawrence

8PO



Staff collectively celebrated Diwali on the 1st October 2022. Diwali is the celebration of good over evil and is celebrated by lighting divas. Hindus, Sikhs and Jains collectively celebrate Diwali. In the Sikh religion Diwali is also known as Bandi Chor Divas and is celebrated to commemorate the 6th Guru being released from prison with 52 Hindu prisoners and returning to Amritsar (Holy City for the Sikh religion). Diwali is celebrated by lighting divas and placing them around your house. Cooking savoury and sweet delights are an important part of the festivities and shared with family and friends.



The long-awaited trip for Thorpe Park had finally arrived; eagerly and excitedly the entire year group



boarded their buses and got their passes at the ready. After what seemed like an eternity queuing (although it moved quite quickly), we were through the gates and ready to enjoy everything the theme park had to offer. It seemed that the queues outside the park were quite similar inside too! The wait was worth it though - there were thrilling, terrifying and tumultuous rides all around the park for everyone. As



it was a very hot day, it was only appropriate to try out the water slides as we knew it wouldn't be long until we dried out! Bundling back on to the bus at the end of the day were tired but chatty students, extra large cuddly toys, snacks and very content teachers!



alteryx

The Thrill of Solving

The Hounslow Careers Cluster endorsed this project that enabled over 20 of our Year 12 students (alongside some students from Logic Studio School) to learn how to work with the Alteryx software.

Many famous brands are using Alteryx software to help empower their

employees to make transformational outcomes. Alteryx introduces a new approach to data analysis that's highly intuitive. It includes drag-and-drop building blocks used to conduct data exploration, perform data analysis and construct automated data pipelines—without requiring knowledge of any specific coding language.

After a virtual launch of the project, our Year 12 students gave up two Wednesday afternoons to learn how to work with the Alteryx software. They then took part in a Datathon Day, from 9am- 4pm, working in teams with volunteers from Alteryx and Accenture providing assistance and acting as assessors as at the end of the day - as this was also a competition with an amazing prize. We also welcomed to St Mark's the students from Logic Studio School who were also taking part.



I was fortunate to take part in a data challenge organised by Alteryx - a company that produces software to make data fun and easy to use. They are a global



company that top companies use. We had two weeks of training which led to the ultimate day with the ultimate prize: a VIP trip to the McLaren Technology Centre to watch the last Grand Prix of the Formula 1 season.

We spent the DATATHON DAY working in teams, working with thousands of pieces of data in order to determine which of the

suspects stole the Queen's tarts - it was an Alice in Wonderland themed day and hats off to Steph (aka Chief inspector Cheshire Cat) for the imaginative theme and challenges (10/10). After creating an algorithm to go from hundreds of thousands of suspects down to 5 it culminated in the presentation stage. My group, Erin Flores, Aditi Kulkarni, and Nikolas Matusiewicz concluded that the Gentleman in White Paper was guilty of stealing the Queen's tarts. After all teams presented their reasoning and findings to the Judges it came down to the results.'

With a five point lead the Flamingo Mallets (my group) took first place winning the exclusive VIP tour. We were ecstatic. So much so, I jumped out of my seat in joy. It was difficult that evening to wipe the smile off my face. 7 hours of hard work paid off.

Zygy Lopez-Dyrka

Sunday arrived and we had to be at school at 9am for a 9:15 departure. Mr. Bowley kindly joined us for the day, and we were chauffeured to the McLaren Technology centre in Woking, in a luxury Mercedes Benz V class. Upon arrival the doors opened, and we were greeted by a gentleman saying "Good morning and welcome to McLaren!" After the initial excitement of seeing such historically significant cars had worn off slightly, our tour guide Matt appeared from the lift.



As he was handing out our exclusive Aluminium lanyards I asked him "Are we the only people on the tour today?" He replied, "You are the only people touring McLaren today and oh what a day we have planned."

We had the opportunity of sitting in the brand-new McLaren Artura starting at £150,000. (We

took a seat around the table with the Sky Sports F1 channel on and we had the opportunity to talk to Lando Norris' chief strategist. I asked him questions about past races and for any Formula One fans reading, I had to ask about the Russian grand prix in 2021 and whether it was a team decision to keep Lando out in the wet! After this we had an exclusive tour of the centre where they produce each McLaren car to order. They are all made and painted by hand.



After this we walked through the trophy corridor which seemed like a never ending walkway with trophies from past victories and championships. Matt told us that drivers are not allowed to keep the trophies as it's not just them that win the race. The McLaren F1 team is made up of 800 people all helping to get the best possible result, so it is only right that the trophies stay where most of the staff work a every day.'

As the race start approached, we headed into the top-secret mission control viewing gallery. It was strictly no photography, however, imagine NASA's space control room but instead of rockets on the screens it was F1 cars, track layouts, and data from the cars. A few months prior to our visit, McLaren had the US Space Force in to help plan out where certain people would sit in mission control. I don't think it can get much cooler than that. Then it was 1:30 and it was lights out and away we went! It was an exhilarating race, and we were all on the edge of our seats, constantly reminding ourselves we were in the headquarters of one of the greatest formula one teams the sport has ever seen. Once the race had finished, we spoke to the chief of operations in Abu Dhabi and asked him questions on the race and what's to come. As we approached the end of the tour Matt had a very special surprise in store for us.

We had the opportunity to hold a race used steering wheel. But this was not any F1 wheel, this was the wheel that brought McLaren their first victory since 2012, and wow what a privilege. Matt kindly begged us not to drop the wheel because it would be an £80,000 deal. As the tour concluded we thanked Matt for the incredible tour and the reps from Alteryx for this once in a lifetime opportunity.



Together with the RE department and Year 7 Form Tutors, the Chaplaincy Team organised the Year 7 Retreats that took place on the 10th and 17th October. The theme of each retreat was 'Called by God'. Students always say the retreats are always fun as well as spiritual and this year they were a great success! We are glad the students enjoyed the experience.

I liked how we did a variety of different activities during the day. The whole day was about getting closer to God. Lydia 7PO

The retreat was my best day.
Krizanne 7PO

The retreat was a time about getting closer to God and people. It was a prayerful moment and we learnt about God in greater depth. I feel thankful to the school for doing this retreat.

Benjamin 7CA



The retreat day was extremely fun.
Helena 7BE



Year 7 Retreat



After Christmas we will again be offering a weekly peer support group for any students who have experienced a significant loss or painful experience. The organisation behind the programme is Rainbows Bereavement Support. For more information see: <https://rainbowsgb.org/>

At secondary level, the groups are called Spectrum. Our very first group completed the programme last academic year. We are grateful to The Catholic Children's Society for the opportunity to run these programmes.

When something significant happens in a family, the entire family is affected. If a parent or sibling dies, a divorce or separation happens, or some other painful loss occurs, not only do the parents grieve, the children do also. Children and young people may find it extremely difficult to verbalise their feelings of grief because of their age and inexperience. The Spectrum programme is a peer support programme which provides young people with a trusted adult and a group of their peers with whom they can work through their grief, build a stronger sense of self-esteem, and begin to accept what has taken place in the family.

November

The Month of
The Holy Souls

On 1st November we celebrated the Feast of All Saints by having a morning Mass before school, followed by a special assembly on 2nd November to mark All Souls Day. Students and staff have had the opportunity to share

the names of any family members or friends they would like prayers for during this month, when we particularly remember those who have died. Mass on Thursday 24th November will be offered for all our loved ones, who have gone before us.



One of my favourite events during the school year is the Year 7 Family Mass. This year the Mass happened on Tuesday 20th September. The theme for this Mass was: 'Do not be afraid' and it was lovely to hear the Year 7 students who were able to lead the singing, having formed a choir, with Ms Jackson. Other students helped with readings and the Gospel drama was a lovely addition to the liturgy.

We are grateful to Fr Austin for celebrating the Mass with us and for his support during his time of being the Parish Priest at Ss Michael & Martin Parish. At the end of Mass we were able to wish Fr Austin many blessings as he embarks on his new ministry in Nigeria.

YEAR 7 FAMILY MASS



Students decorated boats for the mass, offering up their hopes and fears for the year ahead.

ST MARK'S SPORT

The Year 7 football team have made great progress since the start of the year, after a difficult first match they have managed to progress to the last 16 of the Middlesex cup. The enthusiasm for training is exceptional, with 30 students regularly attending training. Star performers so far have been Jean-Rey Soriano, Liam Mascarenhas-Gahlen and Brayden Nketsiah and it is hoped that



positive news of their progress can be reported in the next issue of Veritas.

On Wednesday 9th November, we entered the Hounslow Cross Country event at the beautiful Osterley Park.

Over varied terrain in sunny conditions we had some excellent performances with the following students achieving top ten finished:

- Liam Mascarenhas-Gahlen (6th)
- Klaudia O'Farrell (9th)
- Aleksandra Mlynarczyk (2nd!)
- Michael Garcia (4th)
- Finn Murphy (7th)

Well done to all those that took part.



The Year 8 football team currently sit top of their Borough League after 2 wins against Isleworth and Kingsley academy.



After suffering an unfortunate exit in the Middlesex cup, it's great to see the squad bounce back in such a positive fashion. Excellent attendance at training has really helped improve the fortunes of the side and I'm sure they will continue going from strength to strength for the remainder of the season.



We have had excellent attendance at the girls basketball club on Mondays with the Key Stage 4 team entering into the Borough tournament. They played superbly well and were eventually knocked out in the semi final by Heston. The Most Valuable Player was awarded to Victoria Krol. Well done to all those that competed.

Unfortunately, the Key Stage 3 team were unable to enter due to staff sickness but they will get the opportunity to participate in some competitive fixtures after Christmas - keep coming to training girls!



YEAR 7 TRIP TO THE GLOBE THEATRE

To be honest I must admit that I enjoyed everything about that day, it was definitely worth doing my Bedrock learning. Although, my favourite part in general was when Kevin (our tour guide) took us into Shakespeare Globe especially when we were able to go on it and see the back stage and even practise a line on it! I experienced a wonderful time there, even tiny details as a whole through the door that was covered by a cloth in the back stage, to see if you (the actor) would be going on soon or how high the stage was in general (it looked quite different in the picture). Seeing it in my own eyes will definitely help me a lot in my English studies now, as we are learning about it. -Aleksandra Gaudyn (7Be)



I enjoyed every part of the trip to the Globe but my most favourite part was the scenic walk along Southbank towards the theatre. -Ryan Macwan (7Fi)



I really enjoyed the acting that we got to do. Kevin (our tour guide) did a fantastic job of making the acting fun. -Dale Travasso (7Ca)



What I mostly enjoyed was how big the Shakespearean stage was with all the zodiac stars and I also liked how we were able to spend our first trip together in central London. - Shorena Herazo Rodrigues (7Po)



I enjoyed the role play and reading different lines! I took my Polaroid camera to take pictures as we walked down the route, most of it was construction work so I didn't get any good photos but I really just enjoyed the scenery! It was beautiful. Taking a look inside the globe theater was memorable and I wish to do something like this again. As it's my first year it gave me a good chance to get to know other people and I made some really good friends from this experience. -Tessa Singh (7CI)

My favourite part was the workshop as we got to do fun things like learn insults back in the day and hit our paper when we said a certain word; it was really fun. -Lynelle Yeboah-Afriyie (7Mo)



I liked going inside the globe theatre since it's different to seeing a google image and when your learning about the globe you don't really know what is in there and the paintings on the walls /roof of the stage. I also liked the walk from Waterloo to the globe since we can see all the landmarks of London and the river while we eat lunch. -Gabriel Vettickal (7Be)

On a bitterly cold winter's day, there is nothing better than coming in to the warm embrace of Room 100 and taking part in Y8 Games Club with some of my year group and Ms Ryan! You are welcomed by music playing, you are allowed to eat your lunch and it is a great way to make new friends and to escape the cold at lunch time. There are lots of games to choose from, Dobble and Exploding Kittens are really popular while the old classics of Guess Who and Draughts are always picked to be played. Battleships, Pass the Pigs, Codenames and Uno are among others that are always fun! I would encourage everyone to come- it is a lovely way to pass a lunch time. - Jakub Z 8MO



YEAR 8 GAMES CLUB



Our new cohorts of year 10 and 12 students have signed up this term to start their Bronze and Silver awards respectively. So far they have been learning map and compass skills, and have been planning their Physical, Volunteering and Skills sections to start.



Our year 11 and 13 students who took part in D of E last year are now at various stages of completing their awards. 19 year 11 students have now completed their Bronze awards, so huge congratulations to them as this represents an impressive level of commitment, and contribution to various clubs and activities. Another 16 year 12 students have now finished their Bronze awards too, which were delayed because of Covid restrictions, so again huge congratulations to them. Our year 13 students have longer commitments to their sections, so at the moment only 2 have completed - but we're looking forward to seeing many more of them complete in the new year - and what an achievement it is to gain the Silver D of E award.

D of E – Bronze award



Ruth	Dias
Sian	Elliott
Eugenie	Linhinya
Natalia	Bujak
Daria	Danilewska
Sheniz	Kariyawasam
Natalia	Turek
Rihanna Mae	Del Rosario
Daniel	Taguba
Mary	Peddakotla
Kieron	Rose
Emma	Nagle
Benjamin	Sparkes
Jia	Enokkaran
Naomi	Mark
Zara	Miranda
Bartosz	Bielecki
Lionel	Manalo
Grace	Phelan

Brian Nana-Yaw Sasu
2007 - 2022



On Tuesday 18th October we held a Memorial Mass for Brian Sasu, beloved student of St Mark's Catholic School.

We would like to ask you to keep Brian's family and close friends in your prayers.