



Prizegiving

*Some of our winners
this year*



Welcome to our Autumn Term 2019 edition of Veritas. This has been a very successful term, and I hope that you will enjoy reading about all of the events and activities that have taken place. It is wonderful to see our students fulfilling their God - given potential



in so many ways. We have celebrated success in sports and debating this term, and we all enjoyed the fantastic performances of 'Sister Act: the Musical'. There have been more trips and activities, and I am grateful for the commitment and dedication of the staff who enable these enrichment activities to take place. Faith in Action continues to be central to our Catholic ethos and our Sixth Form students have been excellent role models for younger students. At the recent Senior Citizens party, I enjoyed meeting a delightful lady who had been a cook at St. Mark's for 25 years – and retired 25 years ago! These encounters remind us of the history of the school and the strong relationships that are built over many years.

As I write this column, final preparations for Prizegiving are taking place. I would like to congratulate all students and former students who will be receiving certificates and awards. Once again, St. Mark's is one of the top schools in the country for Progress at GCSE and is one of the top 5 schools in Westminster Diocese for overall attainment and achievement. We are equally proud of our A Level students who achieved the top results in Hounslow in the summer and gained places at the majority of their first choice universities. We look forward to celebrating with them, and hearing all about their university experiences at Prizegiving.

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

Andrea Waugh-Lucas
Headteacher

ART TRIP TO KEW GARDENS



Year 10 artists visited Kew Gardens to collect observational and contextual research for their first of two projects in Component 1. A busy day lay ahead as we piled into the minibus for the journey to Kew. First up was the Palm House, followed by the Princess of Wales



Conservatory, the amazing Hive installation, lunch at the cafe on route to the Temperate House where Chihuly's spectacular glass sculptures were on show and last but not least to the Marianne north Gallery.



From tropical to desert, the day involved a whistle stop tour of the flora of the world, giving plenty of resources to draw and photograph. Marianne North, 19th century explorer housed her 800 detailed and gloriously coloured paintings in a purpose built gallery where the walls are completely covered, like wallpaper in her work.



After an inspiring and visually packed day, we made our way back to St. Mark's sketchbooks and cameras brimming with material to use in the classroom.



The Art Club was involved with the school production of 'Sister Act'. Pupils designed and created mock stained glass windows that featured



prominently on the set during the play. They were keen to personalise the windows and chose to feature the St Mark's lion prominently in the bottom panel of the window. Everyone was excited to see the final results and the windows really glowed under the stage lights.



ART CLUB



On Wednesday 11th of December 2019, Year 12 Faith in Action students hosted our annual Senior Citizens Christmas Party. The party

this year was, in one word, FANTASTIC! The preparation for this party had started weeks before with our fundraising and planning and the sending out of invitations. We then had to decorate the Hall and, on the day, some of us walked down to Cloisters

Nursing Home to help bring some of our guests, who are in wheelchairs, to the party.

We prepared plates of party food that were delicious and had fun singing Christmas songs and making music together. We welcomed guests from Cloisters Nursing Home, Vicarage Farm, Sandbanks, Boswood Court and parishioners from St Michael and St Martin Church.

In my opinion the choir was the highlight of the whole party: I enjoyed seeing the pleasure on the faces of all our guests. However, playing the game pass the parcel was also lots of fun- not only for our guests, but for the Sixth Form. By the noise in the Hall it was clear everyone

on their tables were having a great time. Soon, we invited our guests to the 'dance floor' - the atmosphere was full of laughter and joy.

Before saying our goodbyes, thanks to the generosity of all the students in our school who have supported our Faith in Action fundraising events, we were able to give each of our guests a Christmas gift.

This party was a success in every sense! We wish all our guests a very Happy Christmas.



Senior Citizens Christmas Party

St Mary's University Essay Competition

Towards the end of Year 12 Mrs Ferguson invited my A Level Religious Studies class to take part in the St Mary's University Theology essay competition, based around the title, "Philosophical arguments alone cannot lead to the belief in God". Although we had already studied different philosophical arguments for the existence of God including the Ontological, Cosmological and Teleological arguments, in the Philosophy section of our course, we realised we also needed to incorporate ideas from the Theology section too and, in order to be able to write the essay well we had to first study the natural-revealed theology debate. The 1200-word essay had to be submitted by 11th July. I drafted and re-drafted and then submitted my entry along with other students from my class. I forgot about it over the summer until I received an email, in September, informing that I had got an award and received an honourable mention. I was invited to attend the award ceremony celebration and my parents and teacher came too. It was good to meet the other three students, from other schools, who had won awards too. It was also a surprise to meet Cardinal Vincent Nichols who was awarding the prizes. He individually spoke to each of us and made this an even more memorable event.

Holly Simmons, Year 13



Faith in Action

Some Year 12 Faith-In-Action students took part in an activity to support the Jesuit Refugee Service UK.

"We wrote Christmas cards that will be sent to those people the Jesuit Refugee Service accompany whilst in detention. The JRS directed us in the messages we should write - all beginning 'Dear Friend'. Some of the people they accompany are victims of torture or trafficking or they may have fled their homes to seek asylum due to conflict. Our messages offered solidarity to fellow human beings who are going through particularly difficult times"

Written by Diyon, Zeon and Karl



Faith in Action - Year 7 Fete



For our Faith In Action fundraising activity, we came up with the Christmas Fête.

At the fête we had various games such as "Pin the nose on Mr. Rogers", "Snowman Bowling", even "Giant Jenga". We also had 3 craft activities: creating Christmas cards, decorating wooden baubles, and making small paper straw Christmas trees. We had selfie with Santa featuring Sergio Dias as Father Christmas which all the students really enjoyed.



We did all of this to help raise money for our annual senior citizens party and Oakland's School party, to increase the festivity and help them celebrate this Christmas period.

At the fête, the year 7s, 6th formers and even the teachers had fun and enjoyed themselves, helping to spread the Christmas joy!



With all this fun and festivity we managed to raise more than £580 which, in fact, is the record breaker in how much money was raised through Faith In Action.

By Justin Soriano, Aoife Bourke, Riya Macwan



On Friday 18th November, our Faith in Action class held a party and disco in the Main Hall specifically for the Year 7 students to celebrate their first half term in St Mark's. It was also a fund raising event for us - as we Sixth Form students have been busy raising funds for the two Christmas parties we are running for Oaklands School and local senior citizens. The Year 7s got changed after school and enjoyed themselves - they were all getting involved with Just Dance on the big screen and having fun with our Banana Mascot (Kevin). They had the option to purchase snacks such as crisps and sweets as well as juice. In addition, the memories were captured in our dress-up photo booth and some Year 7s chose to buy these pictures as keyrings. Overall, Sixth Formers, as well as the Year 7 students, had a great time and we thank Year 7 for helping us with our fundraising.



Year 12: Alyssa, Marey and Grace



Faith in Action Year 7 party

Debate and Public Speaking Success!

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 senior level looking to make our mark in the world of Public Speaking once again.

Our winning team was made up of Joe Gibson, Alice Snell, Monet Munyoro, delivering their speech on whether the world still needs religion – an enticing and brutally honest topic with Joe's beautifully written speech and powerful emotion, sandwiched by Alice's moving and moralistic opposition and Monet's inspiring introduction. While small in stature, this team certainly showed they were big in character and voice, and progressed as Hounslow Borough Champions, with Alice Snell winning best opposer.

At the Senior level 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 more teams! Team A made up of Tom Moreland, Joseph Nagle and Gabriel Millin, delivered professionalism, wonderful rhetoric and charisma...in that order. Team B comprised of Stuart Richards, Hugo Dawson and Henry Beesley – this team demonstrating intelligent charm, welcomed controversy and pretentiousness...in that order. The whole competition of the three teams was truly a Clash of the Titans – and the real winners were the audience, privileged to witness such a display of oratory ability, intellect and forward thinking.

A huge congratulations is in order to Joe Gibson, Alice Snell and Monet Munyoro who will go on to represent St. Mark's in the Regional Finals.



ESU MACE

In other debating news, Gabriel Millin, Joseph Nagle and Tom Moreland enjoyed immense success in the first round of the ESU MACE Debate. Arguing with all the political charisma of Churchill, they dominated the competition with their style, rhetoric and erudite arguments. We look forward to seeing how they fair in the later rounds.

Junior Debate League

Our exceptional year 7s and year 8s have taken to Debating like naturals. Having previously faced two of the highest achieving debating schools in the country in the training round and held their own, it was their turn to strike back. Jade Rodrigues, Trinity Singh and Leire Rodrigues proved a formidable force in arguing why school uniform should be abolished and impressed with their incredibly analytical arguments and that rhetoric that oozes style. In the unprepared, Trinity Singh, Joyce Bitumba and Sheniz Kariyawasam took to the stage and gave passionate speeches on why voting should be made compulsory. An interesting topic with General Election looming. These students show tremendous potential for the future. Remember their names!



(If you're looking to join the Debating Club, come to Room 100 on Mondays after school.)





First Aid Training for Bronze and Silver Awards



Super interesting! I really enjoyed it as it helped me understand how to save a life. They taught us important life skills which we may use one day. Fun times!

Carolina Perollo Javar

I enjoyed the first aid course because it was informative and the instructors were clearly enthusiastic which made the experience feel worthwhile. I feel that I genuinely gained some important information and that I can be much more confident in my own abilities for first aid.

Joe Gibson

On Saturday 23rd November the Bronze and Silver DoE Students took part in a First Aid Course. The day consisted of 6 sessions which took us over the key components of first aid. There was a mix of practical and theory. We learnt the importance of CPR and the steps that we should take to ensure that we knew what to do in emergencies, for instance: DRABC (Danger, Response, Airway, Breathing and Circulation) was one of the main sessions and was on CPR on dummies. We all found it tiring and made us realise the difficulty of it – it was very interesting and thought provoking. If there was a real emergency I'm sure we're all capable of helping the casualty.

Anna Marie McGhee



Brilliant Club Trip

On Tuesday 5th November a group of students from Year 10 went to SOAS university for the launch trip as part of the scholars' programme.

Upon walking into the building, we were introduced to one of the student representatives, Samad, who would then be guiding us for the rest of the day. We were brought to the lecture theatre, we were given a brief overview of the course, and an introduction.



Later, we were taught about economics, decision making, and game theory by Samad, the student representative. To call the lesson fascinating would not be an exaggeration- it gave us insight into human behaviour and group dynamics, as well as allowing us to test out some concepts on ourselves, in pairs, imitating the game show 'golden balls'. As well as this, we gained some understanding of oligopoly and price making, and the prisoner's dilemma.

After this, we were given a tour of the university grounds and shown the gallery, which was an awe-inspiring display of masterful woven fabrics and many artifacts.

Additionally, during the tour we were taken through the vast library, an expansive region containing many books, and a limitless amount of knowledge and history. It was a marvel to witness.

Finally, we were taken back into the lecture theatre to be taught about essay technique and to be given the chance to ask any questions we had about university life, which was an excellent opportunity to educate ourselves about potential opportunities in the future.

Overall, the trip was highly enjoyable and very informative, and allowed many of us to start thinking about what we

would do after leaving the school, as well as preparing us for potentially attending university in the future.



Jack Petchey's "SPEAK OUT" Challenge!

On Tuesday 5th November, 50 Year 10 students took part in the 'Speak Out Challenge'. The day involved workshops, led by external guests, that promoted and developed invaluable communication and presenting skills. Throughout the day, students learnt how to write and deliver a speech and the techniques needed to present effectively to a group of people. In the afternoon, all students presented their speech. Topics ranged from Knife Crime, Social Media, Mental Health, Importance of Sleep, Resilience and Not Giving Up on Your Passions. It was a privilege to listen to all the amazing speeches and recognise the increased confidence in the students throughout the day when public speaking.



The following students were selected as the best 4 speakers on the day and they will go onto the next stage in the New Year. Congratulations to Christina Dolan, Larson Rodrigues, Carlos Cabillan and Rachel Amponsah. These students will present their speeches in a Year Assembly and then one will go on to the Regional finals in March.

Highly recommended awards were given to Charmin Mariano, Reuben Pereira, Matthew O'Neil and Mya Groombridge.

Well done to all students that took part.



Tristan Brown

He's been incredible since starting the boxing mentoring at the end of last year going into this year. He has led and motivated the other boys and has been a real role model for the boys in the year below.

He was involved in the recent Jack Petchey day and spoke about how the mentoring had influenced him positively to the point where he'd had no detentions or negatives on sims since starting it and how it's inspired him to work hard and do well. He is also now mentoring a year 9 every Monday morning during registration and is proving to demonstrate fantastic leadership skills.

Nomination by Ms Davies

Anna Marie McGhee

Anna Marie is the pianist for the Liturgy Choir. She is dedicated and comes to rehearsals every week despite being in year 10. She is a FANTASTIC role model to the other students and is leading a guitarist and bassist who are in year 8 and quite a challenge, she guides them with ease. She is a great example of a student who represents our vision of helping others to fulfil their potential.

Nomination by Ms Jackson



Leah Shub

I would like to nominate Leah Shub for her commitment to the school and her commitment to the local community. She has signed up to be a peer mentor she is part of my Run Like A Girl group and she also does work in a local school helping them with gymnastics.

Nomination by Ms Joyce



Senior Maths Challenge

At the beginning of November, just over 50 of our year 12 and 13 mathematicians, along with just under a twelfth of a million students nationwide, took part in the 2019 UK Senior Maths Challenge.

This taxing 25 question multiple-choice test of their mathematical ability aims to provoke a different sort of mathematical thinking and problem-solving to the challenge provided by the A-level.

I am happy to report that just under 50% of them have since earned a Bronze, Silver or Gold Award Certificate.

A special mention should go to Alfie Armstrong of year 12 for attaining the prestigious Gold Award this year.

By dint of his score, Alfie also earned the right to take part in the Senior Kangaroo follow-on round --- so named in honour of the Australians, who were first nation to organise a national student maths competition.

Congratulations should also be extended to our 9 Silver and 15 Bronze Award winners, and to the 13 other candidates who were just 1 correct answer shy of a Bronze Award.

I know the students would like to thank their maths teachers for the smooth running of this year's Challenge, as indeed would I.

If any parents/guardians are interested in seeing the challenge posed to our senior students in this exacting annual workout of the grey matter, this year's and previous years' papers and solutions can be found on-line, initially at 'UKMT'.

Prepare to be taxed, mentally.

Mr. Gold

YEAR 12 PARLIAMENT TRIP

This October, our Year 12 politics class was given the opportunity to travel to Westminster and take a tour around Parliament. We travelled to Westminster on the tube, walking to Parliament from the station, we were able to see the spots in which News stations are planted to give their current reports on Brexit. We met our tour guide and began a tour around Parliament. We sat in the ‘Visitors’ gallery’ in the House of Commons where we witnessed MPs debate and discuss current affairs and issues.

This experience was most certainly different from our visit to the ‘Strangers Gallery’ in the House of Lords. It was definitely interesting to witness such historical rooms and take the tour, learning about what had happened in the past; particularly in a time of such political uncertainty.



Year 12 students in Parliament’s Education Centre with our local MP for Feltham and Heston, Seema Malhotra, and class teacher, Miss Brown.



Since the 2016 Brexit referendum, Leave and Remain protesters have been in permanent - and colourful and noisy - residence in Parliament Square.

After our tour, the class visited the education centre where we participated in a workshop in which we were asked to suggest what our own political policies would be and how we would implement them. Most excitingly, our class had the opportunity to meet Seema Malhotra, the MP for Feltham and Heston. We asked her many questions including about her time at The Green School, where one of our class members had previously gone, and another in consortium currently attends.



Rolo and Yousef examine the statue of Viscount Falkland (Secretary of State to Charles I) in St Stephen's Hall which was damaged in 1909, during a suffrage protest. During this protest a WSPU member chained herself to the leg of the Falkland statue. The spur on the statue was broken in the process, and has since been presumed lost.

Overall, the trip was an amazing chance to explore our subject and witness where UK politics takes place.



In October we went to Amazon's London office for a project bootcamp. It was a trip to develop ideas for our Year 8 project to design an app that tackles or solves a problem in our school or local area. The day was really enjoyable as it was filled with a lot of activities run by the Amazon employees. The best part was learning about all the different ways an



app could change people's lives whilst also learning about using technology to make a positive change. We also had hot chocolate, a great lunch and took a tour around their office. It looks like an amazing place to work! We now need to work on our projects to see if one of the teams from St Mark's can make it to the final!

By Dwayne Jones, Katelyn James, Amy Hanna Sanz

CAFOD Soup Lunch

CAFOD is a Catholic charity who help people in developing countries with issues such as clean water and education. It is a yearly tradition at St Mark’s that the Sixth Form students make soup to sell to students and teachers to help raise money for CAFOD. This year we made leek and potato soup on Friday 11th October. We worked in small groups to help prepare this and made sure it was top quality soup which was sold at lunch time along with a crusty baguette, all for £1. The ethos at St Mark’s School encourages us to help those who are less fortunate and recognise that giving our time can make a difference to others. Our soup lunch was a great success as we had no soup left over and we raised £147.09 for this worthy cause. This money maybe used for something like building a new water system in parts of Africa where people must walk miles to get clean water. Activities like these help us to appreciate where we live and the opportunities that are available to us. Many thanks to all who supported us on the day.

Year 13





At the end of the summer term Gloria Zolnierczyk and Lance Wise were appointed as Joint Chair of the St Mark's School Council for the academic year 2019-2020. Year Council elections then took place in Years 7-12 and from each of those Year

Councils two students were elected onto the School Council. This year the Council has students who have shown themselves to be excellent spokes people for the other students in their year group. Issues that Year groups brought forward for discussion at School Council included: having a place in the school to recycle plastic, importance of ensuring all students are aware of the support for mental health issues, whether girls should be allowed to wear trousers and having opportunities to celebrate the richness of the diversity of the St Mark's community. Sub committees have also been formed and students are working with other members of the student body to take action on some of these issues.

WELL-BEING

We are the Well-being Ambassadors for our school. We are a group of students, who are on a mission to teach our school community the importance of well-being and keeping a healthy mindset. As ambassadors we will do all we can to educate and assist our peers and teachers in finding new and efficient ways to improve our well-being.

We hope to present our ideas soon!

The St. Mark's Well-being Team



by Grace Dorsey

This year's anti-bullying week was led by the year 9 Peer Mentors. The theme was 'Change starts with us'. The idea was that small changes have the ability to make big differences. Something as simple as a conversation can help break the cycle of bullying and create a safer environment.

After completing training workshops about anti-bullying we led an anti bullying week assembly and sold merchandise throughout the week during break and lunch. Many students were very eager to participate in this event and bought anti bullying merchandise for themselves and others to support our work. As a school community we represented the 'Change starts with us' theme. Along with the merchandise we set up an art competition, again, representing this years theme. As Peer Mentors we continue to improve our school environment by giving back and working with our year 7s. We meet groups of year 7s every Monday morning and mentor them to help them in their transition to secondary school.

By Michal Ligezka and Lareina Simonds - Year 9 Peer Mentors



HOUNSLOW TEEN READ 2020

On Tuesday 12th November, six students took part in the 2020 Hounslow Teen Read and attended the launch. We walked to the Robeson Theatre at the Treaty Centre. When we arrived many schools around the Borough were there. We sat down and listened to a talk by author and poet, Sophie Thacker. The six titles were announced by the Teen Read Team and small parts of the book were read out. We then had a picture taken and some got a signed book called 'Somebody Give a Heart a Pen'. When we got back to school we all chose our first book to read. Our Teen Read group will spend the next four months reading the shortlist of six books.

The Twisted Tree - Rachel Burge

Kick the Moon - Mohammad Khan

The Girl Who Came Out of the Woods - Emily Barr

Rosie loves Jack - Mel Darbon

A Good Girls Guide to Murder - Hollis Jackson

The Stolen Ones - Vanessa Curtis

NATIONAL POETRY DAY:

National Poetry Day was on Thursday 3rd October this year. This, once again, coincided with our Open Morning, so we had lots of poetry books scattered around for all our prospective new students and parents to read.



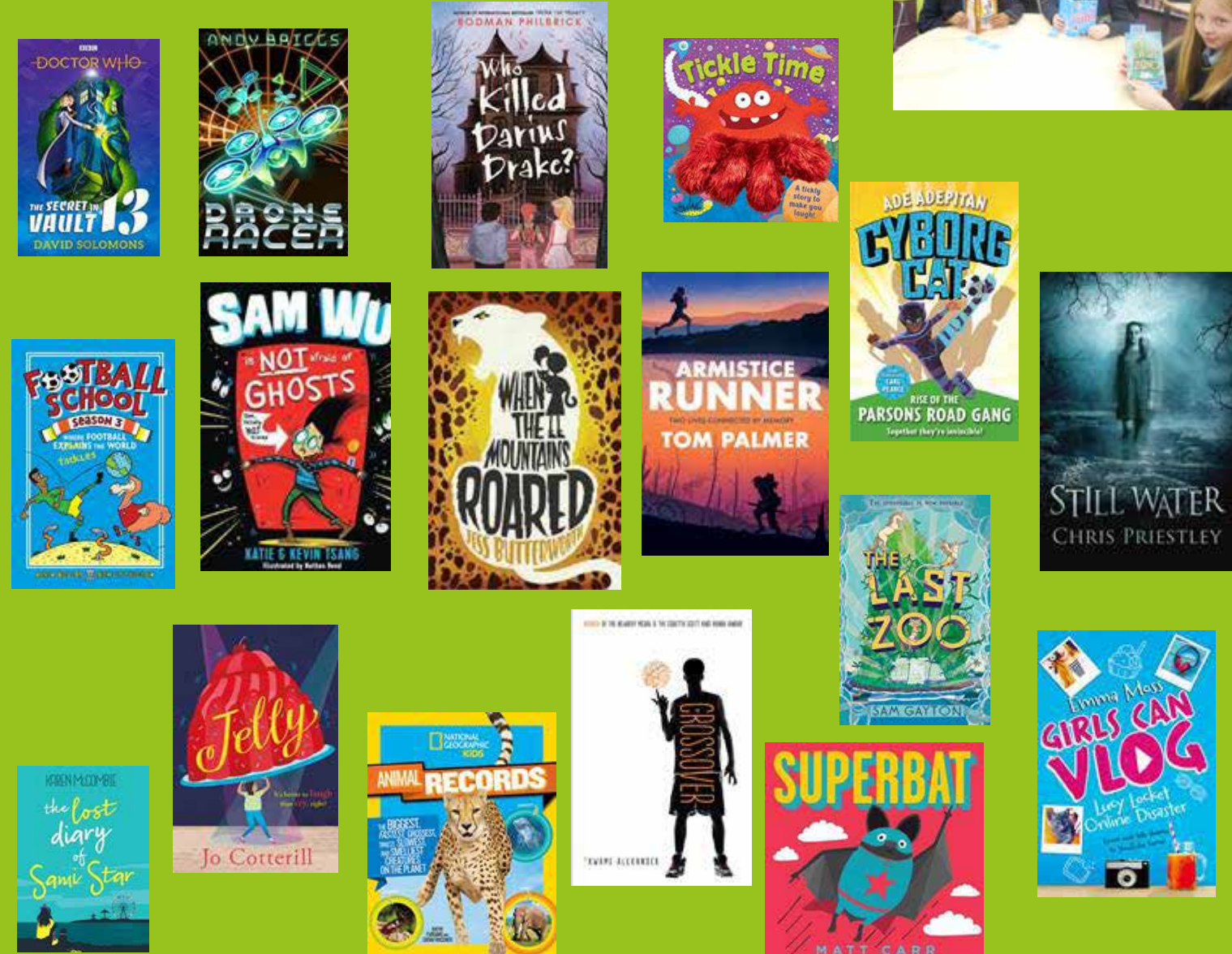
A BOOK FAIR...

came to the LRC in November for two weeks, giving students, and staff too, a great opportunity to snap up some half-price bargains in time for Christmas!



BOOKBUZZ

This year Year 7 students at St Mark's have been taking part in the Bookbuzz. This is a reading programme, from Booktrust, that aims to help schools inspire a love of reading. Each Year 7 student had the opportunity to choose their own book to take home from a list of 17 titles. The books were carefully selected by a panel of experts, and all look fantastic.



READING GROUP:

This group runs every Monday evening after school from 3.10pm until 4.00pm. All students, from any year group, are welcome to drop into this group when they can. We read a selection of books, and often have a visiting author or go on trips. Drinks and biscuits are always available too!

THE BOOKSHELF



On the 26th and 27th November 2019, a group of fifty talented young actors and musicians took to the stage of the Kerry Sullivan Theatre in St Mark's to perform 'Sister Act: the Musical'.

'Sister Act: the Musical', based on the 90's hit movie, is set in the 1970s on the mean streets of San Francisco. The story follows the lively young lounge singer, Deloris Van Cartier (Giorgia Piletto), who sees her mobster boyfriend, Curtis (Joshua Leanord), commit murder. She is relocated and put into hiding for her own protection

by love sick policeman, 'Sweaty Eddie' (Kacper Pasek), and is

disguised as a nun in a California convent. In an effort to keep her out of trouble, Deloris is assigned to lead the convent's choir, an ensemble that she soon turns into a vibrant and soulful act that gains public attention. Despite sticking out amidst a group of sensible, quiet nuns, Deloris is able to use her powerful singing voice to help the Choir of Angels to 'Raise their Voice', and in the process inject more soul into the church, all the while trying not to be discovered by evil Curtis and his minions (Khalid Boinot- Apaloo, Alida Lopes, Tiano Espinheiro).



SISTER ACT the musical



School Productions have always been a huge part of St Mark's Community; just take a look on the walls of the corridor alongside the Theatre. For us and all of those involved, it has been an unforgettable experience and we feel proud to have been a part of the journey. From the songs, dance routines, fantastic costumes, set design and a slice of comedy thrown in for good measure, as well as seeing the chorus of nuns slowly but surely come out of their shells, in particular the talented Sister Mary Robert (Jia Enokkaran) and Sister Mary Patrick (Sadie Bairstow), the musical was a pleasure to be a part of and to watch (so I've been told by many of the audience members).

Even though we only had eight weeks to put the show together, through the commitment of every cast member, orchestra member and all of those behind the scenes, we pulled together as a team and gave it our all to perform the show to our audiences. It has taught us all that hard work pays off, as does always being supportive of one another throughout the rehearsal process. We have made so many new friends and have all definitely grown in confidence.

This production, under the direction of Miss Hutchison, Miss Welbourn and Miss John, gave the perfect opportunity to showcase each individual's spectacular performance skills. 'Sister Act' is of course, brought to life through the gospel tunes throughout, and this was reflected by the audience as they tapped their toes to upbeat music hits provided flawlessly by the live orchestra, such as: 'Take Me to Heaven', 'Raise Your Voice' and 'Sunday Morning Fever', which had a stand-out moment in the form of Sister Mary Lazarus (Alisa Aurangabadwala) wowing the audience with her rapping skills.



The solo ballads interspersed throughout the production highlighted the sheer talent of the cast, with commendations that must go to Maia Walsh, who played the hilariously vigilant Mother Superior, mastering a power over the nuns and bringing her motherly character to life with just one look, and of course, Giorgia Piletto who had the huge task of successfully playing the massive role of the super diva, Deloris.



Policeman Sweaty Eddie received a huge cheer from the audience for his solo performance of 'I Could Be That Guy', particularly during his 'speedy' costume changes!



Congratulations to all those involved, and we can speak on behalf of everyone in saying that we can't wait for next year's production already!

Rachel Amponsah
10Cl and Sinead
Law 10Be



Over the summer, a group of sixth formers went on a trip to India, travelling from one side of the country to the other. More than thirty students took part in the trip this summer – so many that the group had to be split in two! Their journeys took them from the blazing hot city of Chennai on the country's east coast to the chilly mountains of Ooty. They went from east to west, south to even further south – the two weeks flew past faster than anyone expected or wanted.



The most notable part of the trip was definitely the visit to the Elysiom Project in Chennai. The Elysiom Project (meaning 'eternal happiness') is a charitable organisation that works to help disadvantaged children in the local community. Group 1 started their trip by visiting them, with Josh, who helps run the project, helping them settle in the new city. From the very start of the trip, everything was full steam ahead. After a tour of Chennai

Chennai 2019

on the first day, with Josh showing us the beach, a church, and a Hindu temple, we met the children at the Elysiom Project. We played games and danced with them – there were lots of thumb wars and arm wrestling, with the school's resident Strongman, Gabriel Millin, only eventually bested after putting up a valiant effort. The next day, we visited a cultural museum, seeing different styles of traditional housing and then went to the beach together. The few days that we spent with the children at the Elysiom Project were the best of the trip – a few of them even prepared brief talks about different

aspects of Indian culture for us. This was part of their education in English, something that the project helps them with. Group 2 visited the Elysiom Project towards the end of their time in India doing many similar activities. They also took the children on a trip to the zoo, a great day out for all. One thing both groups agreed was that they didn't spend enough time with the Elysiom Project – nothing else on the trip compared!





In Ooty, the students went on a cultural walk and visited the Government Botanical Gardens. Able to appreciate the rich history of the area as well as the vast array of flowers on

display, it made for another memorable day in the trip. The group also went on a safari, seeing a range of animals from elephants (exciting) to deer (also nice, but in a fundamentally different fashion). This point in the trip was also when the two groups were able to meet back up and share stories of the different experiences that they'd had so far.



Transportation was a big part of the trip as well – students had to learn how to navigate through the cities in tuk-tuks. The learning curve for the tuk-tuks was steep – none of the students were quite as good at haggling for low rates as Mr Grover was! Both Group 1 and Group 2 were convinced that they had the



most cramped ride or the most dangerous ride, desperate to outcompete each other for the prize of most foolhardy. The mountain train that the students went on was amazing as well – cramped at

times, it regularly stopped to allow them to appreciate the beautiful views of the Indian mountainsides in front of them.



The groups also visited Kochi, in the state of Kerala – they visited market stalls, haggling for souvenirs and trying

local cuisine. After all that excitement, the rest of the houseboats was much needed. Students spent several days relaxing on houseboats and reflecting on the trip they had been on, before the journey as a whole was to come to a close.



ત્રિદિનના યાત્રા

by
તરલ લઠાદોભાઈ

Chennai 2019

by
Olivier Beaven

To say my trip to South India was 'amazing' would be an understatement. The trip was a truly eye-opening experience and it is a journey that will stay with me forever, as the new ways of life I was exposed to filled me with not only with awe, but with appreciation. The excitement kick started from the moment I knew I was flying out to India; the fundraising and planning fuelled my anticipation as I wanted each day to come quicker. The opportunity to share this experience with others was definitely appealing. Sitting on that huge A380 airbus alongside my friends with two weeks in India ahead of me, was a feeling that I can't quite articulate, but I can assure you, that it's one that everyone should have.

Arriving in India was a surreal moment, the noises of hooting cars, the smells of exotic spices and the sight of a community who run such a different system to our own gave such an

Throughout the trip I tried some of the most delicious foods, visited museums, saw the most beautiful wildlife and even spent the night singing my heart out on a houseboat. There was so much more, but the one aspect of my journey that stood

head and shoulders above any other, was visiting the Elysium Project in Chennai. My time spent there was undoubtedly one of the most emotionally challenging things I've done in my life so far. I spent hours on end working and playing with the most inspiring children you could meet. They were filled with such happiness and love, which didn't correspond to their difficult backgrounds and their own personal experiences in life. Leaving the project, I realised how privileged I am and, most importantly how lucky I am to even have three meals a day. I now understand what's important in life, and that's to quite simply be happy.

We live in a world where technology dominates our life and school seems to be a daily struggle for the majority, but now, I take each moment of my life at home as a blessing. Looking back on my decision to go on the trip, I wouldn't have changed it for the world.



YEAR 7 RETREAT



I liked that we got to play games but also be spiritual as we learned about God
Maximo - 7CL

I liked that we all got to mix all day and do activities with our friends.
Siobhan - 7CL

I really like how we reflected on the things we did in St Mark's during the last couple of days and how to be closer to God

That our form worked together and got to know each other better. We got to connect with God and pray to him.
Angelina - 7PO

I liked that we got to know each other and got closer as a community through all the fun activities.
Dianne - 7MO

I liked how there were many fun activities that could bring us closer to our form, ourselves and God.
Jessica 7BE

My favourite part of the day was probably when we did all of the activities as it gave me a chance to get to know my form better. It was also really fun and the day was great.
Jena 7BE

I liked that we could come closer as a form and spend more time with different teachers and to deepen our relationship with God.
Nya - 7PO

It was fun because we got to spend time with God and talk to him.
Leo 7PO

I enjoyed writing a letter to myself in Year 11 as I liked the idea of it and I can't wait to open it in 2024.
Julia - 7PO

What I liked the most about the day was when we had every activity together so we could build more relationships with each other and God.
Addica - 7PO

The theme of the Year 7 Retreats was 'Called by God' Through various activities, pupils had an opportunity to develop a better sense of self, growing closer to God and building relationships.



I feel I am closer to my friends and I understand how I can improve my friendships.
Brooke 7 CL

Yes, I'm having a great time in St Mark's.
Vasily - 7 CL

At first I wasn't sure about St Mark's because I was missing my primary school but the retreat made me feel comfortable and happy.
Siobhan - 7CL

Yes, I feel it is a safe place for me to be.
Ellen Rose 7CL



I learnt more about Christianity and became more familiar with it.
Joyce 7FI

I have got to know my form better and everyone else, including my teachers.
Angelina - 7PO

I do, especially when we did the meditating and learnt about the armour of God.

Oscar - 7MO

We bonded with not just friends but teachers as well, learning about the school.
Cate - 7MO

I feel that we are a team and family working together.
Domas - 7PO

I feel closer to God and the school community because I had spent the day growing closer to them.
Diane - 7MO



I feel that I am a proper St Mark's student. It also helped me make new friends.
Amelia 7MO

It felt nice and really peaceful because I'm usually very stressed and also it made me feel very happy.
Levia 7BE



Do you feel more spiritually connected to the school?

What did you like most about the day?

Carol Concert



On the evening of Tuesday 10th December, the St Mark's Orchestra and Choir performed a Carol Service for family and friends. It was a wonderful event with the choir singing and the orchestra playing, I was in both of them! The orchestra played 'In the Bleak Midwinter' which I really enjoyed playing. We accompanied the choir as they sang 'Oh Come all Ye Faithful' and 'The First Noel', all of the music giving everyone a Christmassy feeling. I performed a solo of Silent Night which I really enjoyed. The evening focussed on the main reason of Christmas, The Coming of Jesus. Pupils gave several readings and lit the Advent Candles. Overall, this was an amazing experience and I would recommend joining the orchestra or the choir if you can. I also look forward to seeing a bigger audience next year - it's really worth it!



Kiran Gonsalves
9 Fisher



The Year 8 Charities Week was a hive of entrepreneurial activity! We were the first year group to kick start the fundraising for the year and we certainly set a high standard. Each form had a selling slot and activities ranged from raffles to cake sales through to selling interesting coloured lemonade! Our collective efforts raised an impressive £432.41 for the school's chosen charities.

Year 8 Charities Week



"Oh no! Not another one."

Remember Brenda from Bristol's reaction in 2017 after hearing Theresa May had decided to call an election, 2 years after the last one, and one year after the Brexit referendum? Well Brenda's reaction this time is not recorded but is probably unprintable. We had six weeks of pretty much lacklustre campaigning in the cold and damp, and in a case of what many thought was a competition between lesser evils, the result was that Boris Johnson's Conservatives won a large majority (and something for our older readers, the largest since Margaret Thatcher's 1987 victory). As someone tweeted on the night of the 12th as the results came in, "It was that magic time of year where young, immature minds believed that a grey haired, bearded man would bring them lots of free gifts. Meanwhile, most everyone else was voting Conservative."

Here in St Mark's 'constituency' we had our own ballot on the 12th using the candidates who stood in Feltham and Heston, the constituency where the school is located. There was a Labour win with Seema Malhotra securing 56% of the student and staff vote, which was pretty close to what she got in the actual election - 52%. On the morning of the 12th the main Party leaders kindly took time off for their busy schedule to ensure that the Head had cast her ballot, before heading off to their own constituencies. David Cameron tried to disrupt the proceedings, insisting that none of this was his fault, but Ms Waugh-Lucas knew better and promptly dispatched him the naughty corner wearing the 'D for dunce' hat for good measure!





On 3rd December, 10 fortunate girls from Ms Joyce's 'Run Like a Girl' group were invited to attend Dove's

Self-Esteem Youth Summit in Whitechapel. Dove are a beauty brand that are working with the WE charity to help teenagers around the UK feel confident about themselves as members of society. The youth summit was about self-confidence and self-esteem amongst teenagers. Not only were we taught about this but we had the chance to create ideas to help solve low self esteem among young people in our communities. We were able to turn these ideas into real actions with the chance to win £750. These ideas will then be taken into schools and used to promote and encourage teenagers to love and accept themselves for who they are. We feel this was a great experience for our girls' group as it gave us a few creative ideas and goals for us to strive towards in the future.



During the programme we were given some time to read about the causes of low self-esteem and what the effects were on society. Some of the current causes of low self-esteem include social media, diet culture, bullying/cyber-bullying, media, photoshopping and finally, alterations / cosmetic surgery. We investigated and then noticed that the majority of



teens with low confidence had access to social media and were following social trends, models and what society believes are 'beautiful and unique' people. These pictures made the viewers think less

of themselves and try to blindly emulate these socialites. We really enjoyed the experience and hope we get invited to another opportunity with Dove or WE.

Ava Nketsiah



at the National Theatre

On Wednesday 20th November, I took part

in a Creative Careers Day at the National Theatre.



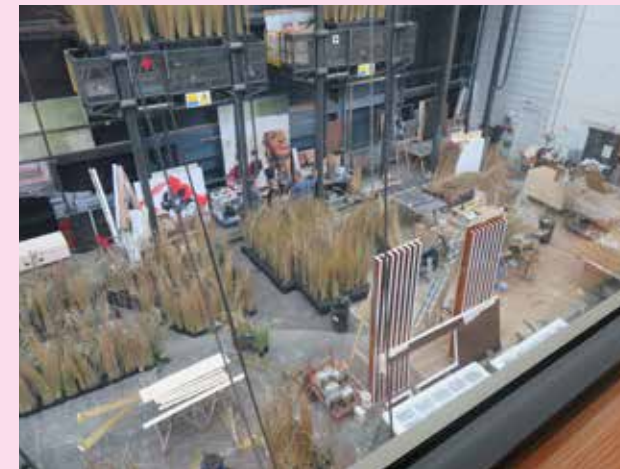
Some of the activities we did were looking at and learning about fashion and costumes made for performances in the theatre. We also saw how many people it took to create singular pieces working as a team. Other activities we did included going on a tour above the main workshops, learning about the creation of prosthetics, make-up and wigs for the performances and what a normal performance night is like, for the lights, sound and backstage teams.

Throughout the day, I was able to learn about the different ways that people put effort into the theatre and contribute in their own ways to the performance.

My favourite part of the day was looking at the costumes created for performances, because it was amazing seeing how much creativity and inspiration can go into one costume. It can also be reused for another performance. Every costume was unique and had its own story, either being made for an older time or a modern one, and had different techniques that the creators used to achieve that effect. I was also able to find out about interesting jobs and career paths in the theatre, as I didn't know that so many varied jobs were available in the theatre. It was a good way to learn more, in general, about the options that people can take for a future in the theatre. This event was also good at letting us find out more about what we would want to do as a career path. An example of this was how we could apply for a specific job or how we could find out whether it would suit us or not.



Paidi Walsh



ways. Later, we went and saw props and sets being made from a walkway. It was so cool! Then we went to wigs, hair and makeup department, we learnt how to make blood bags out of cling film. We had so much fun throwing them! Lastly, we went back to the Dorfman Theatre and went behind



the set to see what the stage manager does. At

the end, we learnt how the sound and lighting worked. It looked really hard and I don't think that's for me, but I had an incredible experience which enlightened me about new careers. My favorite part was when we went behind the set to where the actors wait to go on. The people there are so kind and have inspired me in so many ways. Thank you, National Theatre!

Lucia Medri

When we arrived at The National Theatre, we sat in the Dorfman Theatre and the stage manager spoke to us along with lighting and sound and set creators. She explained, with others, what you have to do for those roles. I never realised how many people worked behind the scenes of plays. After that, we made our way to the costume exhibition.



The lady walked us around and explained the different roles there are in the costume department. For example, people go out and buy things needed for a play. We then had to answer questions about the exhibition. It was so mesmerising; the costumes were incredible. I think one of the most interesting jobs would be making the sets, as you can experiment in so many different



ST MARK'S SPORT

Year 10 Football success

The Year 10 football team produced an outstanding performance in reaching the Middlesex Cup quarter finals by beating Douay Martyrs 3-1 with Tristan Brown being named Most Valuable Player for his hat-trick. In what was a tense affair, with St. Mark's coming under heavy pressure in the early stages, the boys were able to hold firm and grow into the game, taking the lead just before half time. Two early goals in the second half killed the game with Douay responding with a consolation effort late in the game. All the boys should be congratulated on a great game and they await their quarter-final in the New Year with relish.



Year 7 Football

The boys' Year 7 football team has made a good start to the year, remaining unbeaten in the borough league and losing in a tight game in the Middlesex Cup last 16. Captain Tom Madigan has been in impressive form, as have key goal scorer Noah Andebrhan and goalkeeper Benedict Henry-Stumpe. Hopefully, we will have more success to report in the next issue of Veritas as they push to become Borough Champions.



Sports Awards

During the first week of October we held our annual Sports Awards celebration for the academic year 2018/2019. Certificates are presented to those who participate in every sport, as well as Most Valuable Player awards for each team and special recognition awards, such as Sports Star of the Year. Congratulations to all our prize winners and to all those who attend our numerous clubs.



Senior Netball

Well done to the Senior Netball team who took part in the annual Borough Tournament on Wednesday 30th October and narrowly missed out on a semi-final place. A really pleasing result, despite having no time to train together and some of the team never having played competitive netball together. Well done all!



Senior Girls Football Rally

St Mark's entered two strong teams into the rally and were confident of being contenders for the title, having been Borough Champions for the past 3 years. Both teams played some great football, safely making their way out of the group stages to the semi-final. Was it our fate to meet each other in the final? Only Gumley and Chiswick stood in our way Both teams played very well but sadly it wasn't to be, this year.



Year 9 Netball Rally

The Year 9 Rally is always a hotly contested competition, and this year was no different. We knew we had to play exceptionally well to get through the group stages, and play well we did! Unfortunately, the standard was very high and although we gave a good team performance, it wasn't enough to get us to the semi-finals. The girls should be very proud of themselves as all of them worked hard and played some lovely netball, and most importantly, we had a lovely day!



ST MARK'S SPORT



I went to the European Acrobatic Championships in Holon, Israel on 28th of October to 4th of November. I competed in the Junior category for 13-19 year olds. I won two gold medals and a bronze, and came first over all.

Ella Hanna Sanz

In October 2019, I went to Newcastle for an acrobatic gymnastic competition and I won a gold medal in my category (grade 3 womens group). It was my first gold medal!

Amy Hanna Sanz



Cross Country

Well done to our Cross Country team that ran at the Borough Cross Country Championship in November – particularly to Tyrone Visvakula who qualified for the Hounslow team, joining our other students who had already qualified.



BOXING

In June 2019, I was chosen to be a part of a boxing mentoring programme where, once a week, I would train with a boxing coach for 10 weeks. I really enjoyed the boxing sessions and soon discovered that I wanted to learn and practise boxing even more, so I went to a boxing club outside of school called Sweet Science Boxing.

Taking part in this mentoring programme really helped improve my diligence, well-being and determination to strive and succeed. I began to mentor a younger pupil at the school in order to help, guide and inspire him, through the skills of boxing.

I spoke about this experience in the Jack Petchey "Speak out Challenge", which led to me being awarded a certificate from the Jack Petchey Foundation and £250 to spend on my school. With the help of my Head of Year, I chose to put the money towards buying boxing equipment so other people can experience boxing and receive the same benefits as I did.

Tristan Brown Year 10



Boxing has been beneficial for me, as it has kept me calm for the weekends as frustration and stress builds up very quickly, especially in Year 10. It has also encouraged me to come into school and keep out of trouble outside school as it is a great distraction.

Boxing is a good physical sport. It's a good skill to have and is highly linked in with respect and discipline which are key traits to succeed in life. I think that boxing should be on the curriculum in schools especially for boys around 13 to 16 years old who may struggle to concentrate in lessons or have a short temper, as they can release their anger in a session without raging or being abusive. Boxing is an effective way to combat crime, as many victims of crime do not know self defence, possibly resulting in them using a weapon which can be fatal and devastating for families. To sum up, boxing is just an all-round good activity. It's on Fridays if you want to come, but there are limited spaces. If anyone joins who hasn't done any boxing before it will take some time to get on and get to the skill level that we're at now, but we can work with them and help them. It will be good as we can improve our leadership skills and will help people become more confident.

By Christopher Garcia - Year 10



*THANK YOU TO EVERYONE
WHO HAS DONATED TO THE
FAITH IN ACTION TOY DRIVE
THIS YEAR.*

