

# VERITAS

St Mark's Catholic School

No. 23 - SUMMER 2020





A collage of photographs showing students performing music in various settings, including singing, playing instruments like guitar, violin, and piano, and performing in groups. The background is decorated with musical notes and a large star. The text "HOUSE MUSIC COMPETITION" is prominently displayed in the center.

## Year 7/8

1st - More  
2nd - Champion  
3rd - Fisher  
4th - Pole  
5th - Becket  
6th Clitherow

## Year 9/10

1st - Clitherow  
2nd Fisher & Pole  
3rd Champion  
4th - More

Welcome to this edition of Veritas. It wasn't possible to publish the Spring Term Veritas due to the school closure so it has been wonderful to reflect on all of the wonderful events that took place between January and March. In January, we were privileged to host the of Hounslow's Holocaust Memorial Day commemoration and welcomed faith leaders from the borough. In previous editions, Veritas recognised a range of talents and skills that we see in our students and it is wonderful to see them growing in confidence. In particular, I would like to thank the students who put themselves forward for the Hounslow Youth Parliament. This takes a great deal of courage and we wish them well when the elections eventually take place.

Finally, we have to acknowledge the challenges of the past term in 'lockdown' due to Covid -19. So many events were cancelled including the Year 11 and Year 13 liturgies and proms that would have filled the Summer Term edition of Veritas. On May 10th this year, we would also have been celebrating the 60th Anniversary of the school (originally named Archbishop Myers Secondary School). The celebrations have been postponed to the next Academic Year.

We know that remote learning has been difficult for staff, students and parents but our community has continued to support one another through this crisis. We pray for God's blessing on all members of our school community and we look forward to welcoming our students back to St. Mark's in September. I hope that you and your families stay safe and well over the summer holiday.

Andrea Waugh-Lucas,  
Headteacher





# WELLBEING WEDNESDAYS

Wellbeing Ambassador Tyreese Marcano reports on how pupils have been looking after their mental health and wellbeing during lockdown.

Through our wellbeing Wednesday PowerPoints, we have been encouraged to reflect and monitor our wellbeing during this pandemic and have been encouraged in ways stay active, mentally and physically.

I thought it would be a good idea to get some student feedback and those I asked said it allowed them to look at everything that's happened and realise that it's not just them who's been given the short end of the stick and everyone has been affected just as badly, making them more reflective on how they've treated others during the pandemic.

As Wellbeing Ambassadors we have trialled a helpful app called Think Ninja.

It has allowed us to refresh our minds instead of staying bored and inactive during this time, especially for year 11 students who are worried about how to spend their time. Some said it was "nice and refreshing to take their mind off of things".

This app is free for all pupils to download and offers personalised support to boost pupils' mood and cope with difficult feelings such as stress or negative thoughts.

### DOWNLOAD INSTRUCTIONS

1. Search 'ThinkNinja' on the App Store or Play Store
2. Download and install ThinkNinja
3. Complete the registration form
4. Log in using your username and password
5. Start exploring ThinkNinja

### WHY USE thinkNinja

- Beating exam stress
- Coping with difficult feelings
- Boosting your mood
- Dealing with negative thoughts
- Reaching your personal goals
- 24/7 support from the WiseNinja chatbot
- Live text support with a real-life coach

### FIND OUT MORE

[www.healios.org.uk/services/thinkninja1](http://www.healios.org.uk/services/thinkninja1)  
email: [thinkninja@healios.org.uk](mailto:thinkninja@healios.org.uk)

## thinkNinja

EMPOWERING YOUNG PEOPLE TO MANAGE THEIR MENTAL HEALTH AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING

**KEEP LEARNING**  
EMBRACE NEW EXPERIENCES. SEE OPPORTUNITIES. SURPRISE YOURSELF

**CONNECT**  
TALK & LISTEN, BE THERE, FEEL CONNECTED

**BE ACTIVE**  
DO WHAT YOU CAN, ENJOY WHAT YOU DO, MOVE YOUR MOOD

**TAKE NOTICE**  
REMEMBER THE SIMPLE THINGS THAT GIVE YOU JOY

**Give**  
Your time, your words, your presence

**Anxiety**

**WELLBEING WEDNESDAYS**

**nature**

**Sleep**  
Night, Day, Body, Mind, Rest, People, More, Need, System, Longer, Day, One, time, Function, Energy, Become, Each, During, Up, Period, Take, Find, Article, Sleep, Rest, People, More, Need, System, Longer, Day, One, time, Function, Energy, Become, Each, During, Up, Period, Take, Find, Article

**SELF-CARE ISN'T SELFISH**

**STRESS**



Wellbeing Ambassador and GCSE PE student Olivia Young shares how exercise can help all of our mental health and wellbeing.

People tend to struggle most with their mental health whilst doing work at home and at school. So, what can we do to manage this? Well, you can do a form of exercise anywhere, so if you struggle most at home, then you can go to the park, clear your head and take your mind off of things that might be distracting you. It is a fact that regular exercise has a positive impact on not just your fitness health but can also help someone to cope with their depression, anxiety, ADHD, etc. Here are a couple of quotes that encourage people to understand this importance. "Exercise also has great benefits for mental health, it releases endorphins that make you feel happy." Michelle Davis. "Strive for progress, not for perfection."

Our world is full of many different people, from the kindest people to the not so nice people. Now instead of feeling like you're always being judged by one of these people, just go clear your head and



feel better by building up your muscles, physically and mentally. Now always keep in mind that you should do what you love and express yourself as you wish because in the end we are all here to learn, not just at school but from each other too.



## Wellbeing Wednesday Photography Competition

Year 8 student Martyna Biedrawa shares with us her photos and reflections on how nature is important for our wellbeing, particularly during lockdown.



I use photography as a way out of my busy life. It helps me see the beauty in nature that I am so busy to not notice, this way I can preserve these moments, I am happy in, forever .



Each one of these photos are something I saw and thought was beautiful. In photography I can share it with everyone. I can capture a single moment in time which may ever again happen even though the moment may seem like just a butterfly landing on



flower .With one quick glance you may only see that but when looking at it these photos can really make you feel in the moment



your eyes transfixed on the beautiful patterns of the butterfly's gentle wings and you can almost smell the scent of lavender flowers



around you and this is exactly why these photos, and photography overall, makes me feel happy.

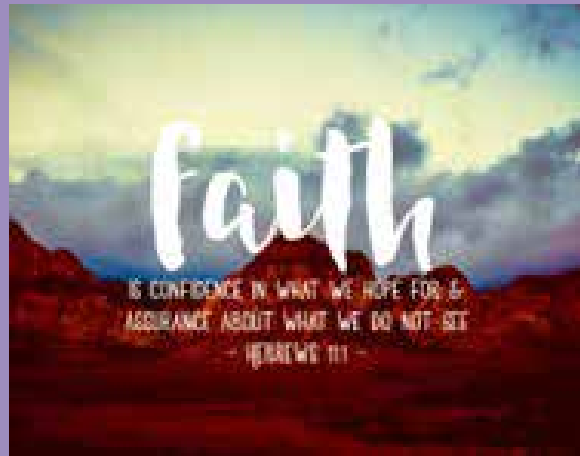






The theme for this year's Mental Health Awareness Week was Kindness. Pupils thought about how kindness is one thing we can change in a world that has been turned upside down by this current crisis. They reflected on what kind of world they wanted to emerge from this pandemic, and the role they have to play in creating positive change.

Teachers shared with pupils the ways they have been trying to look after their mental health and wellbeing during lockdown and encouraged pupils to try some new self care strategies.



# Kindness during COVID - The contagion we want to keep spreading?



'Like an emotional Mexican wave': how coronavirus kindness makes the world seem smaller



7. Footballer Gary Neville Offers Up His Hotels To NHS Staff



Homeless people in London are being offered hotel rooms in a bid to protect them from coronavirus











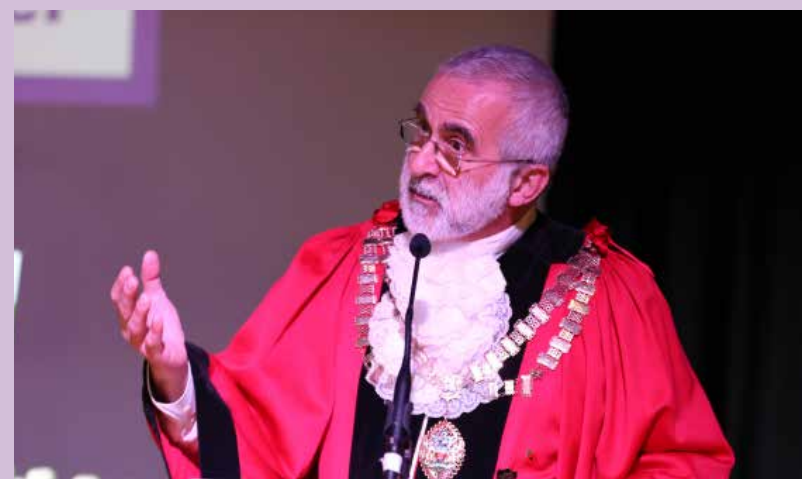
This year, St Mark's was proud to host the London Borough of Hounslow's Holocaust Memorial Day commemoration. The event was attended by several local dignitaries including the Mayor of Hounslow, Tony Louki; Steve Curran, the Council leader; local MPs, faith



Next up was the guest speaker for the event, Natalie Cummings. Natalie's talk was absolutely mesmerising as all eyes were glued to her for the entirety of her speech. At the beginning of her speech Natalie presented the audience with some family context. Natalie, stated that her father was of Jewish heritage and violin tutor to the Tsar's children in Russian in 1917 when they were forced to flee the Bolsheviks and endure on a lengthy, daring walk across Western Russia in order to escape. The walk lasted nearly a year and they were phased with hazardous conditions and lack



of basic necessities such as food and drink for the entirety of the walk to Minsk. Upon arrival to Minsk, Natalie's dad and her family were met by other Jews who told them not to enter the village or they would be faced with harsh punishments. After this the family were left with no choice but to look for safety elsewhere.



atrocities committed in Srebrenica in 1995, by a group of Year 9 Drama students. As the students acted and performed a variety of picturesque movements, another student recited the poem in a dramatic manner, reminding us of the devastation caused by the catastrophic events not only brought about by the Holocaust but also other mass genocides which have unfortunately taken place over the course of history.





Eventually they would be given the opportunity, as Natalie's grandfather was given, to come to England if he provided entertainment in the form of music on the boat to the passengers. He wholeheartedly accepted the proposal and the family then started their new life in Leeds, England. The family settled down and found comfort in the form of their music, more importantly the violin as Natalie's grandfather, father and auntie were all successful violinists. Her auntie Rosa was especially successful and Rosa's story is most certainly an interesting one. In 1935 Rosa was invited to perform with the Berlin Philharmonic. Of course she gratefully accepted the offer, however this would have disastrous consequences for Rosa. In 1938 when the Nazi's reign of terror was gathering pace, Rosa was arrested and brought to a small concentration camp where she was later transferred to Auschwitz. Upon arrival Rosa's pride and joy her violin was confiscated by a Nazi officer. Rosa believed that she would never see that violin again. To her disbelief, after a few days, she was asked to perform in the Auschwitz orchestra. The orchestra played to those coming into the camp in an attempt to lure them into a false sense of hope. Due to playing in the orchestra, Rosa's violin was given back to her and it



was due to her involvement in the orchestra that she managed to survive in Auschwitz all the way up to its liberation.



Unfortunately, Rosa did not live for long after, although she lived long enough to tell Natalie her story and now her story will live on through Natalie and future generations through Natalie's own talks and her recounting of the family history in her book, *(The Fiddle)*. Natalie's powerful talk, was followed by questions from the assembled students. After all events had concurred Reverend Frank introduced closing moment of contemplation where all guests participated in a 2 minutes' silence with



candles lit in memorium in front of a very evocative painting of the memorial site in Srebrenica, specially painted for the occasion by the Art department. The closing speech was made by Council Leader, Steve Curran, who further emphasised the importance not just of commemoration but learning from the events of history to remain vigilant against a current re-emergence of prejudice and ethnic hatred. His words "not only do we need to stand together, but we also need to act together" beautifully summed up the overall message of

living together in a peaceful society where nobody is discriminated, thus bringing to close a wonderful ceremony.

By  
Cormac Diver  
12 Elm





On Friday 27th January, the Year 12 biology students were fortunate to attend a packed day at Harefield hospital, the largest specialist heart and lung centre in the UK and among the largest in Europe, learning about all things heart, chest and lungs.

The day was made up of lectures given by a variety of doctors discussing their fields and key aspects of their specialties. We learnt about different congenital heart defects, which are different ways the structure of the heart can be damaged in newborn babies; the development of and how to read an echocardiogram which we later practiced on our peers and the different ways to perform and interpret medical images to diagnose diseases of the heart using CT, MRI, X-ray and calcium scoring. We also learnt about different lung diseases followed by invasive and non-invasive surgeries like an angioplasty and heart valve transplant.



The day was concluded with rotations of imaging on other students and dissections of animal hearts.



On behalf of all the students I would like to thank all the doctors for taking the time out to teach us about their specialties, it was such an amazing experience and we all left with a newfound appreciation for the human anatomy and all the fields that come together to look after it.





## The Year 12 Economists attended a talk at Eton School given by Dr Gertjan Vlieghe

Dr Gertjan Vlieghe is a member of the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee, having worked as an economics assistant to Lord Mervyn King during his tenure as Governor of the Bank of England. Before his time in the Bank of England, he was also a director at the Deutsche Bank and a senior economist at Brevan Howard. Given the current economic outlook, he will be drawing on his experience across both the private and public sector to address 'long-run Questions about the Role of Central Banks'.

The talk held in Upper School, one of the oldest parts of Eton, was challenging and yet rewarding. The topic of secular stagnation is very much a current economic topic with the likes of Larry Summers espousing this thesis to explain the new normal of slow growth. Dr Vlieghe gave us an insight to the discussions taking place at the Bank of England about the nature of cash in society and the potential onset of negative interest rates. The students enjoyed both the lecture and surroundings and gained an insight into how demanding University might be. When pushed on the Federal Reserve interest rate cut Dr Vlieghe was guarded but didn't rule it out in the UK. As I write this the Bank of England has just reduced the Bank base rate by 0.5% to 0.25%. It is fascinating to reflect that when listening to the speaker he was involved in that very decision a week later.



## MATHS CHALLENGE

At the beginning of February, 185 of our year 9, 10 and 11 mathematicians, along with just over a quarter of a million students nationwide, took part in the 2020 UK Intermediate 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 their GCSE work.

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

A special mention should go to Kyle Ferrer and Romaric Thomas of year 9 for achieving the two highest scores out of the 185 taking part.

By dint of their scores, they have both also earned the right to take part in the Intermediate Kangaroo follow-on round --- so named in honour of the Australians, who were the first nation to organise a national student maths competition.

Congratulations should also be extended to the other 4 Silver and 38 Bronze Award winners, and to the 24 students who were just 1 correct answer away from 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 intermediate 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



Every year the St Mark's school community recognises Fairtrade Fortnight. Year 12 Faith in Action students led the school assemblies, during the first week of March, and linked together Fairtrade's call for cocoa farmers to earn a living income with the celebration of International Women's Day, on 8th March, as Fairtrade were highlighting the stories of many women who are cocoa farmers. For example, Rosine Bekoin is a mum of five and a cocoa farmer from Côte d'Ivoire. Rosine is slightly unusual as cocoa farmers in Côte d'Ivoire go –

because she owns and runs her 2.5-hectare farm, which was passed to her from her mother. Normally it is men

who own farms and earn the income from them.

'I've seen that Fairtrade has helped us a lot in cocoa farming. The Fairtrade

Premium has enabled us to do many things, especially women. It has enabled us to advance our children, and also we use the Fairtrade Premium to build for the future.' (The Fairtrade Premium is an additional sum of

money which goes into a communal fund for workers and farmers to use – as they see fit – to improve their social, economic and environmental conditions.)

On Wednesday 4th March 5 envelopes were hidden around the school. Each envelope had the story of one of the following Fairtrade farmers: Esther, Therese, Rosine, Edith and Lucia.

It also had a Golden Ticket (designed by Richa D'Cunha) and a challenge: to organise an event where they could share the story of one of those farmers. A special prize (more Divine Fairtrade chocolate) would be awarded

to the person who managed to share the story with the largest group.

At first it seemed that Nash De Silva in Year 9 was going to win. He shared the story he had

found, at the start of a PE lesson, in the Sports Hall with 96 people. However, the winner was

**Grace Malone**, in 7 Fisher, who read the story to 186 people in a Year 7 assembly! Thanks to all who supported Fairtrade Fortnight this year in St Mark's.







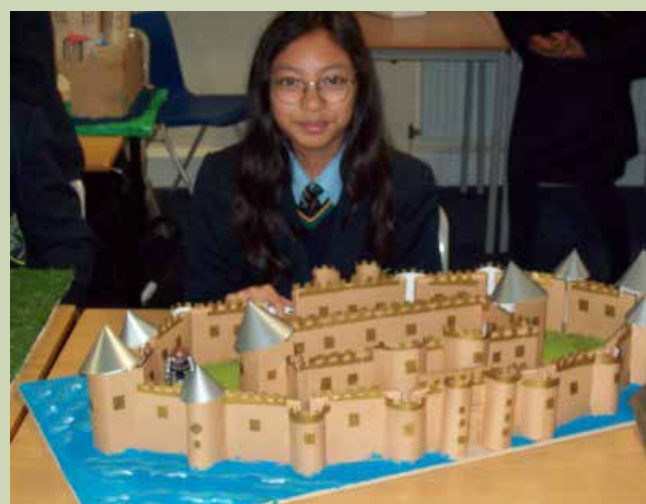
**1ST PLACE**  
**SARAH**  
**KONOPACKA**  
**7 CLITHEROW**



# HISTORY CASTLE COMPETITION WINNERS

**2ND PLACE**

**ALISHA MUSNI**  
**7 FISHER**



**3RD PLACE**  
**OLIVIER GASIOREK**  
**7 CHAMPION**



**7 Champion  
Castles**





# 7 Clitherow Castles

# 7 Fisher Castles



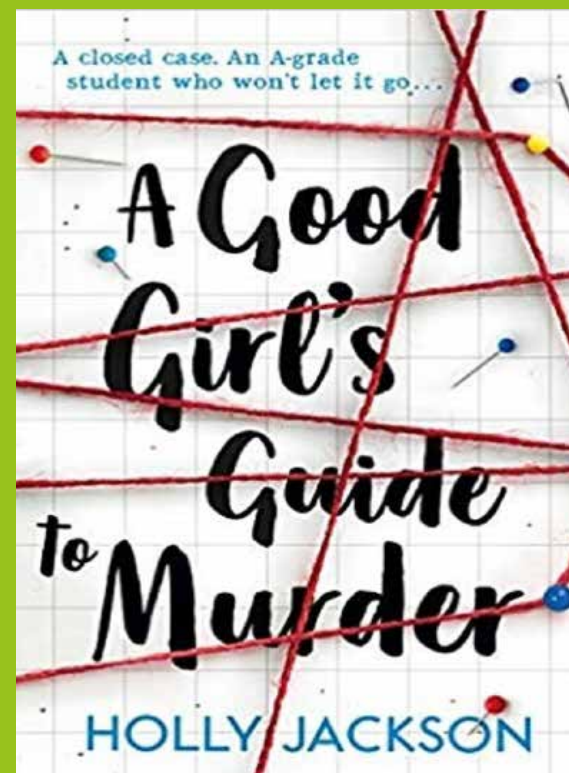


# THE BOOKSHELF

This is a Borough-wide reading activity, which involved students across Hounslow's secondary schools reading the same six books and voting for their winner.

This year's judging panel were :

Ruth Dias 8Fi	Erin Brookfield 8Fi
Cara Stanislaus 8Ca	Marcus Foord 9Ca
Shanon Fernandes 9Ca	Jack O'Flaherty 9Ca
Preefa Mascarenhas 9Ca	Alisa Aurangabadwala 9Ca
Kacper Zwirecki 9Fi	Grace Dorsey 10Po



Our group enjoyed a visit from Karen Franklin from Hounslow School Library Service who discussed all the books and helped us choose our own winner, which was 'A Good Girl's Guide to Murder' by Holly Jackson. The award was presented by last year's winner, Tom Pollock, at an award ceremony in the Paul Robeson Theatre, Hounslow, on March 12th. The winner of the Hounslow Teen Read 2020 is also 'A Good Girl's Guide to Murder' by Holly Jackson, a very popular winner!

## THE HOUNSLOW TEEN READ 2020

# WORLD BOOK DAY



Book tokens were presented to every student in the school. These were

used to buy any of the special World Book Day titles, or to put towards another book of their choice.



Classes visited the LRC to take part in quizzes and games. This year we focused upon The Word of The Lord, working with our chaplain, Ivan Cizmarik, who led some workshops.

During this Year of the Word - The God Who Speaks initiative, the Church focuses on Matthew's Gospel. Three Year 8 forms had an opportunity to explore the Word of God in a creative way. Students from each form were divided into groups and took

three Bible stations in turn. Station one presented a creative video presentation about the Introduction of Matthew's Gospel. Station two was designed for pupils to meditate on the Word of God, an art workshop. What does the Bible teach us about working together as part of a team? That was the third activity, where pupils' challenge was to work as a team and put parts of the Bible verses on teamwork together. Pupils received an official prayer for the year card, which will remind them that The God Who Speaks is continually speaking to us in his Word - the Bible.



## YEAR 7 READING CHALLENGE

A group of Year 7 students have embarked upon a challenge! They, and their peers in all the other Hounslow schools, have set out to read the same 20 books this year. They will be awarded gold, silver or bronze certificates at the end of the year.

Carry on reading these and send me your reviews.

This is the list of books, and perhaps other students may wish to join in too.

Brock by Anthony McGowan  
 The Goldfish Boy by Lisa Thompson  
 War Horse by Michael Morpurgo  
 Mind the Gap by Phil Earle  
 Cogheart by Peter Bunzl  
 Stay a little longer by Bali Rai  
 Gamer by Chris Bradford  
 Ghosts of Shanghai by Julian Sedgwick  
 Malala by Malala Yousafzai  
 Who let the Gods out by Maz Evans

Amistice Runner by Tom Palmer  
 Ghost by Jason Reynolds  
 Smart by Kim Slater  
 The Guggenheim Mystery by Robin Stevens  
 Artemis Fowl by Eoin Colfer  
 Brace Mouth, false teeth by Sita Brahmachari  
 The Crossover by Kwame Alexander  
 Ultimate Football Heroes  
 The Boy at the Back of the Class by Onjali Q Rauf



# Choir Festival



## The choir festival was back.....

St Mark's Choir and 4 primary school choirs (Botwell, Mount Carmel, St Edmund's and St Michael's and St Martin's), sang to their hearts' content on Thursday 28th February. Each choir sang two songs individually, one religious and one upbeat pop song, the night ended with all choirs coming together and singing a medley of hits from the 'High school Musical' series.

On the day of the festival, all primary schools made their way to St Mark's for rehearsals. The St Mark's choir joined the rehearsals after break and performed a taster performance to year 10. Hearing all the choirs sing together was amazing, everyone was so talented.

The evening was a massive success, each choir shone in their own unique way. I particularly enjoyed when Botwell Primary School sang 'Just like Fire'. St Mark's choir sang 'Chases' and I must say that song gave me chills with all the harmonies and the band in the background; it was a showstopper. The medley was a huge success, it was nice to see all the choirs coming as one and singing songs from (in my opinion) the greatest film series of all time. All the children enjoyed singing with their friends and the night was an overall success. All the choirs worked hard as was evident through the astonishing performance.

On behalf of the choir, I would like to say a big thank you to Miss Jackson for putting this wonderful event together for everyone to enjoy. Also, I would like to thank all the members of the choir for giving up their lunchtimes to rehearse. Thank you to the primary schools who were involved and finally a thank you to the audience who encouraged, applauded and sang along.



It will be exciting to see if the Choir Festival of 2021 can top it!

Antsha Oloyede

On Friday the 11th of February, twelve Year 10 students visited Wadham College at Oxford University. They had successfully completed the Scholars Programme as part of a national project run by the award-winning university access charity The Brilliant Club. The programme required each student to submit a dissertation on the Lost Boys of Sudan, a group of Sudanese refugees in America. The group attended weekly university style tutorials which focused on building their independent research and critical thinking skills. At the end of the course they submitted a dissertation that was marked and graded by a PhD tutor from Sussex University.



To graduate from the course, Miss Wickenden and Miss Harris took the students to Wadham College to receive their certificates and learn more about the university. They went on a tour of the college and learnt about its history and how it has gained a reputation as one of the most progressive colleges having originally been the first college to be founded by a woman. It was interesting to discover that the admission of women as full members was only granted in 1974.

The Wadham student that gave us the tour of the college was warm and welcoming and happy to answer questions from the students. He even introduced us to the college dog. Wadham College gave a very informative talk on how to successfully apply to Oxford and other Russell Group universities. We then had a tour of halls of residence and a meal in one of the famous meal halls surrounded by portraits of previous students of the College from John Wilkins, co-founder of the Royal Society, to actress Felicity Jones. The students were inspired to learn about all the extra-curricular opportunities on offer and left with a real sense that they would enjoy studying at an Oxbridge college.



We are very proud of the students who completed the course with all students passing their final dissertation. Special congratulations to Hannah Nicholas, Joseph Gibson, Kathryn Buchan and Lily Doran who all achieved first class marks.



# OXFORD



# SCIENCE WEEK

Science Week is a wonderful opportunity for students to learn and develop their knowledge of science. It offered a wide range of engaging activities where it encouraged students to explore different aspects of the subject ranging from dissection to producing blinding flames through the use of magnesium powder and methane bubbles.

Science week 2020 at St Mark's kicked off early due to Urban Farm arriving in lab 9 on Monday and Tuesday for two days of amazing exposure to a range of animals for all the year 7 classes. The students handled a variety of animals including snakes, tree frogs, toads, cockroaches and stick insects. Also on display were different types of reptiles including lizards, bearded dragons, iguanas and desert geckos. Some of the pupils showed no fear in having these animals and a giant python around wrapped around the body whilst others were shy of touching newts! The experience was extended to year 12 Biology students and they were given talks about the importance of some of these animals to the ecosystem.



## PART ONE .....



# SCIENCE WEEK

Tuesday after school gave many students a chance to make slime and examine some of the properties of this amazing substance.

Unfortunately the pupils were not allowed to take away their slime back home due to health and safety reasons. However, the good news is that the department has stored a range of the best and most colourful ones for future demonstrations and teaching about polymers. The students now have the knowledge and expertise for preparing homemade slime using simpler ingredients.

(<https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/howto/guide/how-make-slime>).

This was followed on Thursday when twenty five lower school students carried out pigs' trotter dissections arranged by the biology department, giving them

an exposure to the use of scalpels and forceps and other instruments to get under the thick skin of the pig in order to see the tendons and bones underneath. Whilst having fun dissecting the pig trotter, they also learned much about the structure of the joints and muscles thanks to Mr. Crone!

The Friday afternoon of Science Week continued with a bang, literally! Explaining everyday risks is a critical task for any teacher - though the exercise can have unexpected effects, as some remarkable photographs reveal. Chemistry teacher Mr. Mihailovic demonstrates with powdered milk the dangers posed by one of life's more unusual hazards: exploding custard factories. He demonstrated how the reactivity of a substance is related to its surface area. A material in powder form exposes much more of its surface to the air; as a result, normally inert substances can become highly reactive. Milk is scarcely combustible when it comes

out of a cow, but if dried and powdered it becomes highly inflammable. The next demonstration used some teacher hands in soapy bubbles filled with methane, and set fire to them, with flames that touched the ceiling (no damage though!). This was followed by a series of demonstrations, including the 'whoosh' bottles by Mr. Windmill. A mixture of alcohol and air in a large polycarbonate bottle is ignited. The resulting rapid combustion reaction, often accompanied by a dramatic 'whoosh' sound and flames, demonstrates the large amount of chemical energy released in the combustion of alcohols.

A brilliant way to end Science Week! The week was a huge success and it definitely deepened the students' love and appreciation for science! Thank you to all involved in any of the activities.



## PART TWO ...



# Slapton

If I had a pound for every time I was asked, 'How many times is that now that you've been to Slapton?', well I wouldn't be that rich but it would be enough to keep me in daily McDonald's cappuccinos for a good half term, plus the stickers (6 gives you a free one!). The truth is, I've never counted, but here's the thing: the first time I went was in 1989 when teaching elsewhere in Hounslow and it was there that I met the then St. Mark's staff and they were great fun. Less than a year later, I was the Head of Geography at St. Mark's. Here's another thing: we teamed up with a nice bunch of staff and students from Heston School. One of their staff trained about ten years ago here at St. Mark's. Funny how things turn out on my first and last trip to Slapton.



Both schools met up at the services on the M5 on the way down and we were lucky to get started again, after the mass consumption of Maccy Ds, cappuccinos and general chit chat - staff and students seemed reluctant to leave the confines of the services (I blame Miss Croft!). As it turned out, we would have spent a drier time had we stayed put but that wouldn't have been much of a trip. We had two days of very wet weather (check the picture of the Bees and Drowned Rat Brigade) with all the staff and students just

getting on with it. The Beesands walk left us all with serious wet clothes issues and I don't recall EVER being that soggy.

The weather did improve, as you can see by the photos. Michael, Tanisha, Francesca, Antsha and Erwin were chauffeur driven in the St. Marks's limo from place to place and I think they thoroughly enjoyed being in the great outdoors, and being able to chill out in the Devonshire evenings.

Tutor Rosie was excellent again this year and the group managed to collate some good data and ideas for titles for their NEA individual studies. I managed to find us a takeaway Tchibo coffee machine in the garage as we left Slapton: I'd been banging on about how delicious it was on the way down to Miss Croft, but the usual garage had become a Costa Express instead!!

There have been many changes at the Centre over the years and I know we always tend to look back with nostalgia. However, the olden days were different and I have such fond memories of the staff and trips (NOT the Foot and Mouth outbreak in the early 2000s). One thing hasn't changed: our wonderful St. Mark's geography students. The 'Fantastic Five' didn't go mad in Devon, but they were a superb bunch to share my final trip to Slapton.



Mr Rogers

# HOUNSLOW YOUTH PARLIAMENT ELECTIONS



Earlier this year we advertised, around the school and through the School Council, the invitation we had received for students to apply to be members of Hounslow's Youth Parliament. The details were also shared via Parentmail. We were absolutely delighted to hear the news that of the 12 candidates in this year's Hounslow Youth Parliament election for the UKYP\*, 5 candidates are from St Mark's: Ruth Dias, Aneira Fernandes, Leire Reyes, Rolann Houslin and Monet Munyoro.

\*UKYP stands for UK Youth Parliament:

UKYP provides opportunities for 11-18 year olds to use their elected voice to bring about social change through meaningful representation and campaigning. There is more information at: <http://www.ukyouthparliament.org.uk/> However, just as we were preparing, as a school, to participate in the UKYP Hounslow Election and our 5 candidates were being filmed, delivering a short speech on why they should be Hounslow's representative on the UK Youth Parliament, we received an urgent memo:

Dear Colleagues,

As you'll know, Coronavirus (or Covid-19) is currently headline news across the world, including in the UK. Taking into account the guidance issued by the Government yesterday and advice from the local authority, we have regrettably taken the decision to postpone this year's UK Youth Parliament election.

At this stage, we cannot give an indication of when the election will be postponed until - but, based on current guidance, our hope is that we can deliver it in the Autumn Term instead.

So, our candidates have more time to prepare for the election and we really hope one of them will be successful!





# YEAR 8 AND 9 TRIP THE NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

During the day we participated in a number of activities including:

- **Investigate Science Centre**

We were able to explore over 300 real Museum specimens, which included everything from dinosaur fossils to butterflies and rare minerals. We studied and investigated different species and came up with our own theories.



- **Classification and Adaptation Show**

We learnt how all living beings are grouped and adapted to their habitats. We were also able to test our own identification skills. Miss Brown was given a big scare from a snake in a suitcase and we were all blown away by the giant squid!



- **Museum Treasure Hunt ~ Split into two teams of Year 8 vs Year 9**

\*Year 9 had their experience to their advantage and won the challenge\*

Fun challenges and tasks were given to us to be completed as a team. Miss Brown and the Year 8

team were working hard however Miss Croft and the Year 9 team had the winning advantage. 'We had fun time off school, however it was still an amazing and educational experience.'

Written by Merdi Lutete and Giselle Dias



Fossils and realistic artificial structures of significant animals for display



Live mechanical model of T Rex. Added sound effects and movement.

## Year 9 Mentoring Programme

This year, myself and an extended group of Year 12 Volunteers were offered the chance to embark upon a mentoring opportunity with a group of Year 9 students. The plan was to act as guides throughout the year in managing homework, whilst actively helping them with general questions and guidance. As a group, we decided to meet on Tuesdays after school, working together to complete homework that the students may have found challenging. Within the group, 'families' have been set up amongst the Year 12 and Year 9 students, smaller groups that remain constant throughout the mentoring so that familiar faces can be created and referred back to. It is great for the Year 9s to be paired up with Sixth Formers, who are studying the subjects that they may want to complete as homework that evening, as it allows for more in-depth assistance. It has been great to see the Year 9 students becoming more engaged in the programme as the weeks have gone by and also have a deeper interest in their work and subjects. We love discussing and guiding the Year 9s through questions regarding GCSEs and picking options, and how to navigate school in general. As a Sixth Former, it has been nice to be able to get involved with the lower school once again and develop our mentoring skills. Of course, this would not have been possible without Ms. Joyce and her guidance to both us, the Year 12s, and the Year 9s.

Ines Walker  
12 Willow



Emma Nagle and Filip Ziokowski entered an annual competition called Young Writers 'Through Their Eyes' and were chosen to be published in Through Their Eyes - Twisted Words! It is the 29th year of the competition and they received in excess of 10,000 entries and they noted that the standard really wowed them they said so it is an amazing achievement to be published!



## Young Writers





On the 4th March 2020 a group of 16 students at St Mark's, the Year 9 Girls Group run by Ms Joyce, got the opportunity to experience WE Day.

I was given the opportunity to attend WE Day 2020 at the SSE Arena. We got there by taking the tube with Ms Joyce & Ms Armstrong and soon arrived in Wembley. When we arrived our seats had been taken by another group but we luckily got upgraded to better seats and a amazing view.

I really enjoyed hearing all the speakers stories including those from Idris Elba, Lewis Hamilton, Jamie Oliver, Alfie Allen, Adwoa Aboah, Gwendoline Christie, Laura Whitmore to name a few. It really made an impact on me as well as the group.

Maya Ghazal fled Damascus leaving behind her home, her plans and dreams. With determination, hope and resilience she started a new life in the UK. Maya dreamt of becoming the first female Syrian refugee pilot and has successfully received that title. Her story really inspired me and changed my views and aspects for the future.

My favourite part of the day was being able to experience brilliant artists music live ; Gunnar Gehl, Calum Scott and Leona Lewis. Their performances were unreal and I was so lucky to see them live. It was a empowering day .



I enjoyed WE Day because it was a great experience and we got to hear from a lot of influential speakers. I especially enjoyed Leona Lewis as she is really empowering for young woman" - Maddie

"I really enjoyed listening to Calum Scott live !! " -Leah

"I really liked when we saw Idris Elba. He made a lot of good points about his childhood and how we should live our lives" - Shanai

"I was lucky enough to see my idol, Idris Elba in front of me it was an amazing experience.I also loved seeing the teen titans because it was part of my childhood" - Emma-Rae

"It was a magical, empowering day, which everyone could enjoy. An all around blast !!" - Maia

"As a student, I'm always trying to achieve my academic goals and some days it can get tough but I realise I have someone to go to: Ms Joyce, the head of the Girls Group, who only wants us to see the good in ourselves and in others. She took the time in organising a trip for the girls to go to the SSE Arena,WE DAY from which many memories were born. I managed to reconnect old friendships and learn more things about society, myself and what goals I actually want to achieve in the future. We heard the many inspiring stories, one was from a Muslim girl, who put her passion into action, defying the stigmas that come when wearing a hijab. I am extremely grateful that I am part of an encouraging group of people, especially with a teacher who shows endless amounts of support, through words and actions" - Erin





# BE REAL!!



At school I am part of Miss Joyce's year 9 girls group called Run Like A Girl. One of the most recent issues the group looked at was body positivity. According to Be Real, 79% of 11-16 year olds say how they look matters to them and 35% say that it causes them worry about how they look. We had assemblies and PSHCE lessons about this but did people actually listen? So we thought that we should take a more visual approach. On the Friday before the body positivity week some of the girls from the group and Miss Joyce printed out lots of posters that had quotes like "You are beautiful no matter what shape you are"

, "I am enough", "No abs, still fab" and my favourite "Real girls are never perfect and perfect girls are never real". Then we went around the school and stuck them to every mirror so every time someone tried to look in the mirror to see if they looked alright they would see a nice quote and feel happier. During the week the school made pledges to unfollow anyone that didn't make themselves feel good on social media. At the end of the week we had 'filter-free friday' where the girls' group and the teachers didn't wear any make-up or hair products so we were completely natural. I think that the impact of the campaign was that people felt better about themselves and know that if they didn't put on a mask of make-up and straighten their hair then they are still the same amazing person they were before and they are still beautiful.



By Libby Duncan

## Evelyn James Year 10, wins national competition

The Columban Missionaries is a Catholic organisation working in 16 countries. They work 'in solidarity with the poor and the exploited earth, for justice, peace and the integrity of creation.'

At the end of 2019 they launched a Schools' Journalism competition for students aged 15-18. We advertised this competition in St Mark's. This was the brief:

***'The culture of 'throwaway' is pervasive in our world today. The throwaway culture is a human society strongly influenced by consumerism. The term describes a critical view of overconsumption and excessive production of short-lived or disposable items over durable goods that can be repaired. The issue is an important one for young people, who are responding to such issues as single-use plastic, excessive packaging and waste in the fashion industry.'***  
***Students aged 15-18 inclusive were invited to write an article or make a video report that informs and raises important issues on the topic: 'Tackling our Throwaway Culture'.***

Evelyn James in Year 10 took up the challenge, did some journalistic research and managed to submit her article just before the deadline of

February 14th, 2020. We are delighted that her submission was awarded second place and received a prize of £150! Ellen Teague contacted the school on behalf of the Columban Missionaries: 'We would like to congratulate the school for one of your pupils being a winner in our Young Journalists' Competition . . . It is a great credit to your school that one of your pupils has done so well in a national competition.' We agree!



The full article is on the following page .....



# Are we really stewards of the earth or destroyers?

*By Evelyn James*

We are now living in a world where many people are exploiting the earth through ignorance, without paying any attention to their actions. Are we really stewards of the earth or destroyers, one may say?

The throwaway society we live in has been strongly influenced by consumerism. Pope Francis in his 2015 encyclical *Laudato Si'* urged that every living person on this planet should pay serious attention to environmental issues facing humanity. The Pope reprimanded that our home is beginning to look "more and more like an immense pile of filth" due to our consumerist mind-set, since we frequently discard items without any thought process. The Book of Genesis, states that God created us to be stewards of the earth and gave us responsibility to care for our planet and all species. Earth is a gift from God for all the world to share and it's our duty to protect the earth for future generations. However, we are in the process of completely destroying our 'common home' as we carelessly strip it of its resources. Even when we see the drastic effects of climate change, deforestation and many more concerns, some of us just can't seem to understand the seriousness of our actions, nor understand that it is the unprivileged communities that are suffering the most. Pope Francis also highlighted that today's 'throwaway culture' is also reflected in our continual waste of food, stating that "food that is thrown away might as well have been stolen from the table of the poor, the hungry". There are one billion people underfed, two billion overfed and, staggeringly, we still waste a third of all food produced. In the UK alone, 8.4 million people are struggling to afford to eat which is equivalent to the entire population of London. This tells us that food waste is not only affecting the world's poorest countries, but also highly developed countries like the UK. In the UK alone we throw away a staggering 460,000 tonnes of bread a year – that's the equivalent of 177 million slices a week, according to a Tearfund paper on 'Waste'. This waste could be tackled if only we could be more mindful of how much we buy, and make sure we actually use rather than making it go to waste. If food waste were a country, it would be the world's third largest emitter of greenhouse gases, behind the US and China. Surely, this puts things into context for us, especially the amount of food we are unnecessarily wasting. Donating some of that extra food to your local food bank, rather than wasting, would be a way to demonstrate stewardship, as it is our duty to feed people in need.

We humans have also developed a habit of always fitting to the latest trends and, seemingly, we enjoy buying new items on a daily basis. Items of clothing can go out of fashion within a matter of weeks, leaving garments hibernating in our wardrobes for years until we just throw them out. The amount of energy put into creating that item is wasted, as well as the fossil fuels used to create that energy. All that is left is an unreasonable amount of greenhouse gases and the calamity of climate change.

Climate change negatively affects us all, but the poorest communities are the most vulnerable. By 2030 an estimated 120 million could be pushed into poverty and an estimated 600 million more people in Africa could face malnutrition as agricultural systems break down due to climate change impacts (Statistics from ActionAid). But even after modern day activists like Greta Thunberg, David Attenborough and Chief Raoni Metuktire speak out like modern day prophets, we continue with our lavish lifestyle. We have become indifferent to the many who suffer in our world, caught up in our own lifestyles. By buying fewer new things, we could reduce this scandal. We should be helping the poor out as we are all gifted with human dignity. This makes us all equal, as we are all made in the image and likeness of God (*Imago Dei*). As climate change attacks their dignity, due to our careless decisions, we are obliged to help our brothers and sisters living in poverty.

We take things for granted when actually there are many in the world that are less fortunate than us. It is about time we start being more thoughtful of them. But there is still hope for us! We can still be in control of our future and the future of our brothers and sisters.

As a practical step, we can all do something in our households to reduce our consumption of Earth's resources. We need to understand that even the smallest things can make a change. Donating some of your clothes to a local charity rather than sending them to a landfill, or turning the tap off when you brush your teeth will make a difference. We will be judged by God on our behaviour as stewards, so it is essential that we start making wiser decisions before time's up. It is important that we value and care for the environment because we only have one planet and we must conserve it. No matter who we are, each and every one of us can make change happen. We can all do our bit to help our planet as we take our step on the path to true stewardship. We have to start making changes right now, before it is too late as these things have and will affect not only us but also future generations. Many small changes can lead to a big change, in regards with our food, clothing and many more. All of us need to work together and faster, to put an end to our throwaway culture.

*Evelyn James a pupil of St Mark's Catholic School in Hounslow, London. For a full list of the competition winners please visit: [www.columbancompetition.com](http://www.columbancompetition.com).*



# St Mark's - THE Teams!



Year 8 Netball



Junior Football



Senior Netball



Year 9 Football



Year 8 Football



Senior Netball



Girls' Basketball



Year 10 Football



Borough Cross Country



Cross Country



Year 10 Netball



Year 7 Football



Year 11 Basketball



Year 9 Netball



Indoor Athletics



Year 8 Basketball



Year 7 Basketball



Year 7 Football



# HOUSE ART COMPETITION



## Winner of Year 7/8 Group

**Eugenie linhinya**  
**8 Becket**

### Year 7/8 Group

1st	Eugenie Linhinya	8 Becket
2nd	Shawn D'Souza	8 More
3rd	Sara Konopacka	7 Clitherow
4th	Ruth Dias	8 Fisher

### Year 9/10 Group

1st	Maria Gonsalves	10 More
2nd	Wallace Fernandes	9 Campion
3rd	Ellen Duenas	9 Fisher
4th	Daniel Zdziech	10 More



## Winner of Year 9/10 Group

**Maria Gonsalves**  
**10 More**