

VERITAS

St Mark's Catholic School

No. 20 - SPRING 2019



The Choir Festival took place on Thursday 28th February. It consisted of 5 Primary Schools, (St Edmund's, The Rosary, St James's, Botwell and Mount Carmel) and St Mark's School Choir. The event involved each choir singing two songs individually, one religious and one upbeat pop number, before all choirs came together to form a super choir and a medley of hits from 'The Greatest Showman'.



The day of the Festival started with all Primary Schools making their way to St Mark's for rehearsals. St Mark's joined after break and it was really fun hearing what everyone had prepared; it was lovely to see each choir shine in their own, unique way.

The evening was a huge success; each choir sang their hearts out. I particularly enjoyed when the Rosary school sang a song from Brave; it was lovely to see the smaller children singing so passionately. It was so cool to see some schools singing in 3-part harmony and even including sign language in their performance. I didn't expect the standard to be so high.

Singing 'He's Able' was great as it's such a passionate song and our choir sang it so well. I loved singing the Hamilton/Destiny's Child mashup as I got to sing one of my favourite songs! It was exhilarating to sing the lead, to show my passion and do what I love in front of such a huge crowd! It was lovely that my family were there to watch!



Our choir worked so hard. We gave hours to rehearsal to make sure that our performance was perfect! It's amazing that such a large group of people can come together, learn new songs and sound so good in such a short amount of time. I love being a part of the school choir, it's so much fun! And I love that there are so many different people from each year.

A big thank you to Miss Jackson for putting this wonderful event together for everyone to enjoy. Thank you to the St

Mark's choir for giving up their lunch times to rehearse. Thank you to the primary schools who were involved and finally a thank you to the audience who encouraged and applauded.

I can't wait for the 2020 Choir Festival!

Maia Walsh – 8 Pole

Choir Festival



In the Spring 2018 edition of Veritas, Mr Enright announced his retirement and my appointment as Headteacher. When I was appointed, I was aware that I was following in the footsteps of outstanding leaders who had served the school for many years. At the end of last term, it was a privilege to welcome Paul Enright (2001 – 2018) and David Sheath (1986 – 2001) to our Prizegiving Ceremony. Former student Lisa Walton who is now an Executive Headteacher in Derbyshire returned as guest speaker and spoke warmly of her time at St. Mark's.



St. Mark's continues to be highly regarded and we received 1100 applications for Year 7 in September 2019. Our vision to ensure that all members of the community fulfil their God-given potential is reflected in the outstanding examination results, distinctive Catholic ethos and dedicated pastoral care. Over the past term students have worked hard and many have continued to participate in the wide-ranging activities offered beyond the curriculum which I hope you will enjoy reading about in this edition. One of the highlights of the term was the Choir Festival and it was wonderful to welcome the choirs of our local Catholic Primary schools to sing with our own outstanding school choir.

The wellbeing and safety of students continues to be at the heart of daily school life. This term we have focused on educating students regarding Online Safety in PSHCE lessons and assemblies, together with addressing other important issues. We endeavour to work together with parents and carers in order to keep students safe.

On behalf of all of the staff, I wish you and your families a very happy and holy Easter.



Paul Enright, Andrea Waugh-Lucas, David Sheath

Section 48 Inspection “OUTSTANDING”

At the beginning of last December, the school had a Diocesan inspection, known as ‘Section 48’. During the two days, a team of four inspectors carried out a rigorous and thorough examination of the RE department within the school and the broader Catholic Life of the school. As previously informed by the Headteacher, we were delighted that the team judged the school to be ‘Outstanding’ in every area, including students making ‘excellent progress in religious education at every key stage. Pupil attainment at both GCSE and A level is exceptional’, while ‘The school excels at being a community based on Catholic tradition and practice. The notion of service to ‘neighbour and community’ is built into the mission statement and is an ideal that is clearly understood and lived out by the whole school community. The sixth form ‘Faith in Action’ programme is a special feature of the school.’

During the two days of the inspection, the team observed 17 RE lessons, scrutinised pupils’ work in their exercise books, visited form groups and observed assemblies. They spoke to over 100 pupils in formal meetings as well as speaking to many individual pupils on their travels around the school. The inspectors were extremely impressed by everything they saw and everyone they spoke to, commenting particularly positively on the conduct and manners of our pupils, as well as the way they were able to speak so articulately about their experiences at St. Mark’s. The outcome was a tribute to the hard work and commitment of all members of the school community – students, staff, and parents – that help to make St Mark’s such a special place.

The full report can be read on the school website.

La Casa de Bernarda Alba

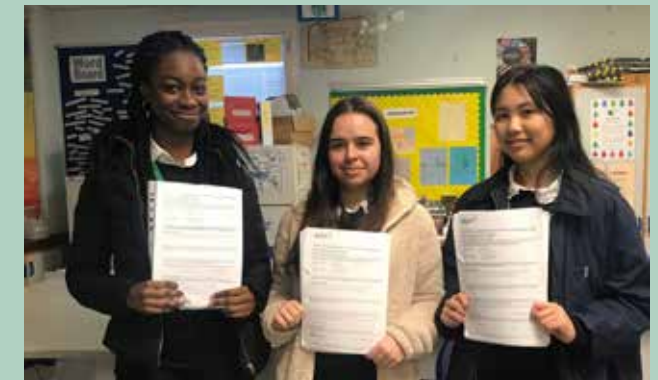
As a way to grasp the concept of matriarchy during the Spanish Civil War, a group of A-Level Spanish students were given the opportunity to go on a trip to The Arundel Centre to watch a play called ‘La Casa de Bernarda Alba’ (The House of Bernarda Alba). The play, written in the 20th century by Federico García Lorca, focuses on the themes of reputation and class as the domineering matriarch, Bernarda Alba and her five daughters have been grounded to an 8 year mourning period which causes tension to mount within the household. We were aware that the play was to be acted in Spanish but there was a great sigh of relief once the translation appeared on the screen. At times, the play was very captivating, from the performance of the actresses to the recurring motif of the bellowing music that called for laughter. It was a bit confusing at times but overall everyone enjoyed the experience of going to the theatre. Whilst it was amusing, it gave us an insight into the text that we will later study in our course and also presented the opportunity to practise our listening skills. On behalf of the A-level Spanish students, we would like to thank Ms Cruz and Ms Bunting for organising this outing and providing another opportunity to bond outside the of the classroom environment.



Chantelle Tetteh and Maria Weldon

The Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)

Since first hearing about the EPQ, I knew it was something I wished to do as I thought it would allow me to explore more deeply into topics I have a deep passion for but aren't covered by the specifications we take. The topic I chose to look at was heart valve surgery, which came from a week of work experience seeing the procedures done on patients. After seeing this, I decided it was definitely the topic I wanted to look more into as it was something I found particularly fascinating. Also I thought it would be helpful in my preparation for my future in studying medicine and for life at university in general, such as writing dissertations and completing analytical work.



Writing the report was definitely a new experience as it was my first time ever writing such a long project. I did face some hurdles when dealing with time management and organisation, but from this experience, I was able to develop these skills. The taught sessions held by teachers on these topics were incredibly helpful and ensured that I felt supported during the whole process. Additionally, I learnt key skills such as referencing and how to structure a report, which I believe will aid me for future life at university.

Completing the presentation also allowed me to develop skills I already had, such as voice projection and confidence, as it was my first time presenting in front of people I had never met before so it was definitely an interesting and helpful experience.



All ten EPQ students are incredibly proud of the projects we have created as we are able to see the final product completed and feel happy with the outcome. Additionally, the hard work and effort that went into creating the piece increased the happiness we have gained in its completion and it has given us more confidence. We are immensely grateful to all the teachers who have given their time to helping us during our taught sessions and by supervising the projects, as they have ensured that we have produced a product that we are all very proud of.

Charlotte Earley (13 STH)

The following students have been working on their EPQs since May 2018:

Chris Tomy, Daniel Callaghan, Dylan Camara, Isabelle Olanipekun,
Eunice Flores, Gabriela Cha Cha De Freitas, Angelica Di Domenico, Thomas Ferreira, Eoin Hanlon, Charlotte Earley.



URBAN FARM

I would like to share one of the most exciting experiences with you. On Friday 8th March 2019, my class and I saw some interesting, creepy and also very weird but special animals that came from Urban Farm. Two staff members also came to tell us about the fascinating creatures. We looked at them and had a go at carrying them and we also learnt a lot about wildlife that we didn't know before.



In my opinion the experience of having Urban Farm coming to our school and showing and telling us about animals is really beneficial toward our learning. Even though I was scared of some animals I did hold two snakes around my neck which was absolutely fascinating to see how they adapt to a human's body heat. We want to thank Urban Farm for their generosity in sharing these animals with us because a lot of students wouldn't normally get this opportunity.

By Sheniz Kariyawasam

Some facts that we learnt were:

- Humans are on top of the food chain as the biggest predator.
- Insects are at the bottom of the food chain.
- Examples of amphibians-tree frogs and toads.
- Examples of insects-cockroaches and stick insects.
- Types of reptiles-lizards: bearded dragons, iguanas and desert geckos.
- There are legless lizards.
- The difference between lizards and snakes is that lizards have ears but snakes don't so they cannot hear anything.





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.

Science week 2019 at St Mark's kicked off early due to Urban Farm arriving in lab 9 on Thursday and Friday for two days of amazing exposure to a range of animals for all the year 7 classes. See the article by Sheniz Kariyawasam. The students handled a variety of animals including tree frogs, toads, cockroaches and stick insects. Also on display were different types of reptiles including



lizards, bearded dragons, iguanas and desert geckos..... and some of the pupils showed no fear in having these animals and a giant python 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 on the importance of some of these animals to the ecosystem.

This was followed on Monday when about fifty mainly lower school students carried out pigs' trotter dissections with Mrs Kingsland, Ms Kafoor and Ms Drage. They used scalpels and other tools 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.

The Wednesday afternoon of Science Week continued with a bang, literally! Firstly, a group of Years 7-9 watched Mr Yiu and Mr Janman conduct an experiment where 'hands got set on fire'. They



covered the 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 and 'screaming' jelly babies. The pupils were then treated to a selection of methane and hydrogen rockets being fired in the sky on the KS3 playground. Mr Shore and Mr Janman conducted a series of loud bangs with gas bottles being ignited in the windy conditions. Thursday was devoted to the Biology Museum (arranged by Mr Shore and Ms Drage with the help of the year 13 students) which saw a large number of pupils turn up to Biology museum in lab 1 looking at a range of animal specimens stored in alcohol in the museum's spirit collection ranging from beetles to insects and similar invertebrates.



A brilliant way to end Science Week!

The week was a huge success and it definitely deepened the student's love and appreciation for Science! Thank you to all involved in any of the activities.

journneys

SCIENCE WEEK POSTER COMPETITION

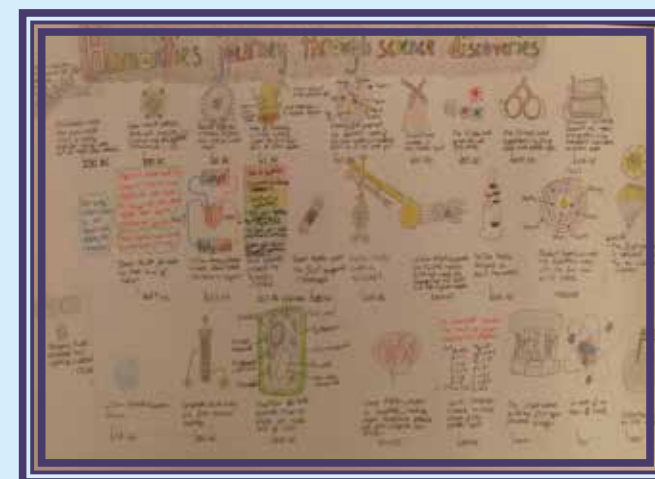


The Science department ran a competition during Science week to create a poster about anything involving journeys.

The five best posters from our school will be entered into the UK-wide competition with the chance for students to win an array of prizes including a special Guinness World Records prize.



1st Place



Judging and rules:

Posters were judged on creativity, how well they fit the theme and how well the poster has been made or drawn.

The winning entry from St. Marks' was judged to be a very thoughtful effort from Krystian Filipek. Well done to all who entered!



ART AT ST MARK'S



It has been an intoxicating, eye-popping, rip-roaring year so far in the Art department. Yes that other worldly, cutting edge, visionary mind-palace that is the Art Faculty have done it again. Our students have enjoyed life drawing at a public gallery, attended lectures by Royal Academicians and a Turner prize winner, worked together with local artists in achieving their Discovery Arts Award and worked alongside an ex St Mark's student now recently elected member of the prestigious Young Barbican Visual Arts Group. At the start of a very important year for Y11 & Y12 students, the Art department and Orleans House Gallery collaborated to help provide two life drawing classes.

Students were taught how to study and capture the living human form, a discipline practised for centuries by the Italian greats like Titian, Michelangelo and now Hounslow's finest Shenic and Jade. It is arguably the best training to help an artist develop their drawing skill plus it will help those students boost their GCSE & A Level grades.

Just before Christmas our lucky Y12 students got the chance to attend the 2018/19 'Art In Action' Lectures. Held every year in the centre of London students can go along and listen to internationally renowned artists like printmaker Chris Orr MBE, ceramist Kate Malone (BBC2 Judge) and artist, broadcaster and Turner Prize winner Grayson Perry CBE RA talk about what it is like to earn a living as a professional artist.



Also in December a selected group of more able Y9 students assembled to participate in an all-day creative challenge. Working with Dawn Smithers and her team of artists, the group of potential Art GCSE candidates got to work with paint, batik, and screen printing to produce fictitious maps. Daniel Zdziech, Grace Dorsey and Rebekah Ward were among 13 others who impressed the Schools' Coordinator for Richmond and Wandsworth council.

The work produced will shortly be exhibited in the school and each of the students will be awarded a Discovery Arts Award. There are five awards available in total, gold being the top award and worth 16 UCAS points (points that can help you get into university!!)



Wind forward to 2019 and our highly talented Y10 GCSE students have been benefitting from the assistance of ex St Mark's student, visiting artist, film maker and now newly appointed Co Curator of The Young Barbican Visual Arts Group Alexis Parinas. For the next 3 months Alexis has agreed to work with the Y10 students in class to help with their print making.

Ms Wheeler and I are very grateful to Alexis for giving up his time to come in to help and inspire the next generation of 9/A* art students. Who knows they might in turn enjoy working in the creative industries for a world renowned arts centre.

On the 7th of March 2019, the Jack Petchey's "Speak Out" Challenge! took place at the Heston Community School. Maya Wozniak (10 Mo) and Sofia Piletto (10 Cl) took part in this after having been selected as winners from the Year 10 speakers earlier this year.

The two finalists along with pupils from ten other

schools from the Hounslow Borough were given communication skills training delivered by Speakers Trust – the UK's leading public speaking charity, and then had to give a timed speech in front of a distinguished audience which included the local MP Seema Malhotra and the deputy Mayor of Hounslow as well as the all the parents, family and friends of the speakers.

The two girls gained enormous benefit from the experience and were presented with the trophy and the photos taken with the invited guests. We hope the experience will help them to extend their willingness to further develop their public speaking skills and achieve further success!



At the beginning of February, approximately 180 of our strongest year 9, 10 and 11 mathematicians, along with just over a quarter of a million other students nationwide, took part in the 2019 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 the usual school work at the end of Key Stage 3 and throughout the GCSE years.

I am delighted to report that just over 40% of them have since earned a Bronze, Silver or Gold Award.



A special mention should go to Scarlett Clarke of year 10 and Sebastian Sparkes and Alfie Armstrong of year 11 for attaining the prestigious Gold Award this year.

All 3 of them, plus Pietro Nobili of year 9 (Silver), by dint of their scores, also earned the right to take part in the Grey Kangaroo (year 9) and Pink Kangaroo (years 10 & 11) follow-on rounds --- so named in honour of the Australians, who were the first to organise a national student maths competition.

Congratulations should also be extended to our other 24 Silver and 48 Bronze Award winners, and to the 32 candidates 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 experiencing 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 stretched.



Life After St Mark's

On the 11th February, A 'Life after St Mark's' talk was held in the theatre looking at the progress of 3 former St Mark's students and their progress after sixth form in their selected courses and education paths. This event was organized by Dr Chakraborty in order for current students to gain first hand knowledge and experience from

former students about studies and the university experience as part of an introduction into life in higher education. These former students shed some light on topics such as EPQs, studies in certain subject areas, student loans, jobs and work experience, hobbies and side interests and university accommodation just to name a few and much more. Each former student had their own story to share about their personal experiences, challenges, successes and lessons they had learnt as well as tips to benefit current students. No two stories were the same with students majoring in bio-chemistry to stage directing and drama thus making the talks engaging and memorable for the current students to learn from firsthand. At the end of each talk, there was a Q and A session for students to unpick further the brains of former students who had the knowledge and experience to help decode uncertainties and confusions in the large world of higher education. Personally I really enjoyed listening to each and every one of these talks and as an attendee of several 'Life after St Mark's' talks, I can whole heartedly say that I had learn something new from each new talk which I believe will benefit me and other current students in our future in higher education and I thank teachers like Dr Chakraborty for organizing events like these for current students like me to learn from.

Gareth Gbesemete-Kusenu



Sam Aguilar, Ellie Haines, Anthony Lunn

WISLEY GARDENS

Year 7 Science club had the opportunity to visit Wisley Gardens on Tuesday 12th March and become investigative plant scientists and entomologists themselves.



"It was an overall very compelling and enjoyable day from looking at the plant disease, to the insects and invertebrates, and walking around just generally looking at them." - Emma Nagle, 7CA



"My favourite part of the Wisley Gardens trip was plant pressing as I had lots of fun and had a great experience. We even got to make our own with a daffodil. I will definitely visit again someday with my family and friends." - Katelyn James, 7PO



"The time I had at Wisley Gardens was amazing. We had to come to school (regular time). Then we got on the minibus and were on our way. When we were greeted by our guide, he told us a little about the garden and we were off. We did so much. We went to a glass greenhouse, we identified plant viruses, and we pressed plants. Honestly, my favourite school day." - Ethan Anderson, 7PO



"At first I was really lucky to go and I'm extremely grateful for the whole experience. Overall, my favourite activity (out of many) was going to the glass house and being plant

detectives. We got to wander around two different types of controlled environments, rainforests and deserts, collecting information about different plants including, different flowers in the rainforest and a variety of cacti and aloe in the desert area. Despite the rain, the whole trip was amazing! Being plant detectives, learning about plant viruses, using microscopes on insects and even making our own pressed plants to take home, was great fun and beneficial for everyone who came." - Joy Soriano, 7CL





In our 'Run Like a Girl' club, we don't just talk about our experiences in school or in our community but we also talk about who we look up to and their life experiences. There are lots of females who inspire us. People who we consider 'ran the world' or are currently 'running the world'. Maya Angeleou changed a generation and subsequent generations with her poetry and writing through her forcefulness and determination. Michelle Obama's dedication to being a voice of support for many women around the world is an inspiration to us all. Even singers like Beyoncé Knowles-Carter have inspired us. She is a driven, talented individual who is focused on what her purpose in life is and her songs remind us to be proud of our gender. My favourite role model is my mum as she does not allow her age or gender to hold her back from pursuing her dreams.

There are many more women like those who I have listed, but I feel that these really stand out to me as they fight for what they believe in and empower others to fight too. These women influence us to carry on in times of trouble that we face in our everyday lives. This is what 'Run Like a Girl' is about. However, this club is not just about listening to stories about inspirational women. It is about taking action to create change. Ms Joyce has told us that we have the power to make a difference in the world so that's what we will aim to do.

-Ava Nketsiah

In our club 'Run Like a Girl', we have been focusing on what we believe it's like to be a girl in our school, in our wider community and in the world. As a group, we have explored some of the challenges we may face as females as well as some of the more difficult challenges women around the world face.

One of the main aims of our group is to become empowered so that we can empower others. One of the key focuses this term has been around **"being brave, not perfect"**. We believe that this fits into our everyday lives as some of us try to be perfect to fit other's standards instead of focusing on being ourselves. With so much pressure from social media, it can be hard to move away from society's idea of beauty but we must try.

After hearing this, many of us know that we can stand up for ourselves and pursue who we want to be. After being in Ms Joyce's club for a while we have been taught that it is okay to make mistakes, we're allowed to be confident, we're allowed to smile when we want and we're allowed think that we are beautiful the way we are and that no one should tell us differently.

-Isobel Grant

"I don't know what I can do. Still I know I've got to try."

"I am not a prize to be won!"

"People think I'm odd. So I know how it feels to be different, and I know how lonely that can be".

"If you do your best each and every day, good things are sure to come your way"

"Our fate lives within us, you only have to be brave enough to see it."

SPREADING OUR MESSAGE

ONE of our goals this year is to spread what we have learned so that we can empower others. We really wanted to spend time celebrating successful women in our world so that others recognise the important role women have in building a successful society. In our own community at St Mark's we have lots of female role models that we can look up to including our new head teacher Ms Waugh-Lucas. We were lucky enough to sit down with Ms Waugh-Lucas this term to ask her some questions about her career journey so far, who her role models are and what advice she would give us as young females trying to navigate the world.

Ms Waugh-Lucas spoke to us about believing in ourselves and working hard to achieve our goals. We spoke about the role our faith can have in helping to guide us especially in times of difficulty. We talked about some of the pressures we feel to conform to society's ideas of beauty and perfection. Ms Waugh-Lucas reminded us that we all have natural beauty that comes from inside and that we have to ensure that we show it as much as we can.

As individuals we aim to continue to grow and develop in to successful, independent, strong women who don't measure our success by how 'pretty' or 'nice' the world perceives us to be but instead look to strong female role models in our community as people to aspire to be like.

Emma Rae Hedger

During this term we have touched on many topics in the our 'Run like a Girl's' group but we are planning to do more. We are planning to inspire other girls and bring up equality. Our love and passion for independent women has inspired us to even make an assembly on the topic talking to other young women to speak out for themselves and not bottle up their feelings and emotions.

"Who runs the world, GIRLS"



Helping women around the world

We understand that women around the world face horrific conditions because of their gender. Next term, the 'Run Like A Girl' group will be thinking about ways to help women around the world. We want to learn more about women who struggle with womens rights and find out how we can help. It is shocking to learn that some basic rights that we take for granted, such as driving or leaving the house without a man, are illegal in some countries. We believe that women in these conditions don't need pity, they need empowerment.

Paidi Walsh

Ibtissam Jaber works outside of her home just to prepare food for others. This is what she says: "Every morning I woke up, sent my children to school, and then travelled to Beirut—like a true businesswoman! My products generated a total of USD 4000. Never in my life had I imagined I would earn so much money."



Naidiso Sarapo was widowed in 2014 and now she says, "Men in the village wonder how I manage to take care of my family without my husband and take the lead in a society where traditionally men have always made the decisions, but I tell them if women are given the chance, they are just as capable of managing finances and providing for the family."



THE BOOKSHELF

On 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.



WORLD
**BOOK
DAY**
7 MARCH 2019



St Mark's judging panel for the Hounslow Teen Read enjoyed a visit from a School Library Service Librarian, Karen Franklin, who discussed all the books and helped us choose our own winner, which was 'Satellite' by Nick Lake. The award was presented by last year's winner, Will Hill, at an award ceremony in the Paul Robeson Theatre, Hounslow, on March 19th.

THE CILIP CARNEGIE AND THE KATE GREENAWAY MEDALS 2019:

Each year St Mark's students shadow this prestigious national book award. We read the same eight shortlisted titles as the panel of Librarians. The winner's announcement will be made on June 17th, so we have until then to read the books.

This year we will also be shadowing the Kate Greenaway award, for the best children's book illustrations, with Art students.



The Hounslow Teen Read 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:

Daniel Zdziech, Lily Wilson, Esther Colaco, Grace Dorsey, Hannah Nicholas, Shamika Fernando, Anna-Marie McGhee, Ella Hanna-Sanz, Evelyn James and Amelia Smith.

As selected students in St Mark's, we participated in the Hounslow Teen Read 2019. We had the option to read as many of the 6 shortlisted books so that a favourite could be chosen. Whichever book received the greatest amount of votes would be the winner.

Will Hill, the author of After the Fire, spoke of his life as a writer which was quite interesting. He announced the winner of this year's

Teen Read which was 'White Rabbit Red Wolf' by Tom Pollock.

I enjoyed the event though I'd preferred it if Satellite won.

Daniel Zdzicech



Six year 9 students were selected to go to the Paul Robeson Theatre at the Treaty Centre for the presentation of the winner of the Hounslow Teen Read. The winner of the 2018 Hounslow Teen Read, Will Hill came with his agent to present the winner. Will Hill talked to us about his writing journey, how he got into writing and his books. He talked about 'Department 19' and 'After the Fire'. There were lots of questions from other students from different schools. At the end of the speeches Will Hill did the reverse order of the shortlist. In third place came 'Orphan Monster Spy', 'Weight of a Thousand Feathers' came second and in first place came 'White Rabbit, Red Wolf' by Tom Pollock. It was a good trip and we all enjoyed it. Anna-Marie McGhee



Teen Read 2019 Winner

'White Rabbit, Red Wolf' by Tom Pollock



A Day in Parliament amidst Frenzy

On December 2019 I was very kindly invited to spend a day in Parliament doing work experience with our local Labour MP Seema Malhotra. It has been an incredibly insightful and truly unforgettable experience.

My time at Parliament has given me first-hand experience of the working of our government system, and I have better understood the amount of debating, research and dedication our MPs put into every decision that they make at Westminster for our country and each constituency. It has boosted my interest in politics encouraging me to involve myself in politics outside of school and increased my political awareness.

I particularly enjoyed listening in on the Westminster Hall debate on the fish industry, hearing all the different perspectives on one of the small but staple sectors in the UK. From my understanding, upon leaving the EU, the fishermen/women would have greater control of the Common Fisheries policy who would get to fish in UK waters, as well as their access to EU markets. Similarly, I also got to watch Prime Minister's Questions on the day where I saw the intense debating of the two leaders, Theresa May and Jeremy Corbyn, over yet again more Brexit policies and the best solution to the problem of the Irish backstop. The PMQs added depth to my knowledge of Brexit, revealing how the EU had been a more significant part of our everyday life than I thought and that leaving will be an even more complex and lengthy process than anticipated.

In the afternoon I attended Seema's interview with BBC's Norman Smith and heard the opinions of MPs from other parties such as Sammy Wilson from DUP and Kemi Badenoch from the Conservative Party. They all expressed their outlooks on Brexit, whether there are chances of a second referendum or just a no-deal Brexit. It was exciting to hear varied opinions and see all the journalists, visitors, and MPs buzzing around Parliament.

Very fortunately, I had another chance to return to Parliament the week after and attend a Brexit Select Committee. A Select Committee is a committee made up of a small number of MPs who are appointed to deal with particular areas or issues, in this instance they had experts on EU policy from Oxford and experts of the European Parliament to discuss in depth the future of Brexit.



l-r Norman Smith (BBC correspondent), Nia, Kemi Badenoch MP, Seema Malhotra MP, Sammy Wilson MP

I was fortunate to have had the chance to attend all these debates and meetings and at the same time see and experience life inside Westminster: where the MPs eat, their office building, different sections of Parliament and all the other parliamentary workers who help them. It was indeed a fantastic experience getting to know Seema, Lucy and Neha who helped and guided me through the days step by step and gave me a keen understanding of our Parliamentary system.

Nia Enokkaran, 12 EON



February 7th saw eight talented sixth formers and also Gabriel Millin perform in 'Who Killed the Headmaster?'; raising funds for a charity trip to Chennai. The play followed the mystery of the headmaster's dramatic death, focussing on the implicated staff



members and their varying motivations for killing him. With tension racking up throughout the night, all was revealed in the third act. This year only two teams were able to correctly solve the murder, with everyone else left scratching their heads.

WHO KILLED THE HEADTEACHER????

The night was organised by all those going on the trip this summer, with much of the collaborative effort focussed on work behind the scenes. With some preparing food, others selling raffle tickets, and many moving chairs, everyone involved helped make the night a success.



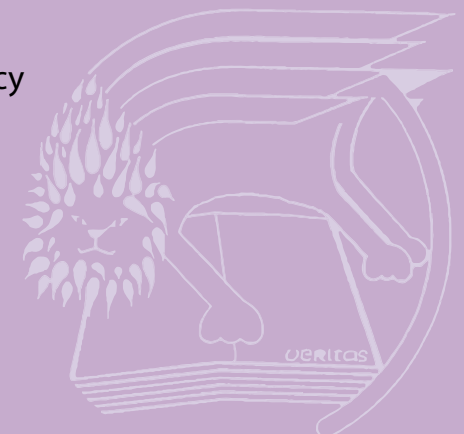
A big thanks should also go to Joseph Nagle for his piano playing, as well as to the teachers without whom the evening couldn't have gone ahead – Mr Shore, Miss Kingsland, Mr Grover, Doctor Chakraborty, and Mr

Alexander were all instrumental in making the event a success. Altogether, the night raised an amazing amount of money which will help the school buy supplies to bring over to the Elysium Slum project in Chennai, India. The whole night was to help this trip, which will take place over the course of two weeks in July as sixth form students travel from one side of the country to the other. These students will be working with children in Chennai as they continue to learn



English and develop their literacy skills.

Overall, the night was an undeniable success with all involved excited about the opportunities afforded by it.



PUBLIC SPEAKING



The spring term has proved to be yet another success for St. Mark's Debate Club with the school dominating in nearly every competition it has entered.

Year 7 Junior Debate League

A trip to St. Mark's biggest debating rivals, St Paul's Girl's School took year 7 students Emma Nagle, Giorgia Piletto, Trinity Singh and Valentina Silva to an intense debating

competition in which they were posed with advanced motions for such young debaters. Their first debate saw the team opposing a second referendum on EU membership in which they skillfully took apart the arguments of St. Paul's Girl's School and brought them a decisive victory in the first round. The team also came out victorious in the second round where they advocated greater regulation of social media meaning that the four girls are through to the London Finals. Their passionate speaking voices and intelligent arguments put them leaps and bounds beyond most other year 7 teams they faced.



The Mace Debate Competition

By far the most intense debating competition St Mark's has participated in this term has been the Mace Debate Competition run by the English Speaking Union. After

Joseph Nagle and Gabriel Millin had a decisive victory in the first round last term the stakes were raised as in the second round, only one team could go through. The duo had to argue against businesses promoting a political message and were ultimately successful winning a place in the third round. This was hosted at Cardinal Wiseman, the only other state school in the competition, where Joseph and Gabriel had to combat the idea of commercialized surrogacy. In the end they were not successful, but after carrying the school the furthest into the competition it has ever come and some questionable judging, the team was ultimately defeated by St Paul's Girl's school. The pair were pleased with their achievement and hope to bring the school yet closer to victory in the next year.



European Youth Parliament

On Friday 8th March, Gabriel Millin, Joseph Nagle, Tom Moreland, Pippa Dawson, Liam Kelly, Loju Owolabi, Lisa Osayomwanbor and Akash Bhadusia all took part in the European Youth Parliament at Haberdasher's Aske's School.

This was a completely new format of debate than the team were used to but the day proved to be a great new experience and tremendous fun to take part in. It fell to the St Mark's team to argue for a motion that called for greater combating of anti-Semitism and racist activities which the team defended passionately. Tom's introductory remarks set out a reasoned and logical argument (as well as introduced a tricycle metaphor into the debate which became a running joke for the rest of the day) whilst Joseph's summary provided perhaps the most well received speech of the whole competition. The motion was almost unanimously passed. The rest of the day saw St Mark's continue to fight its corner with Pippa, Lisa and Akash offering quick and sharp responses to the flaws in the opposition's arguments and helping to boost the team further ahead in the competition. During the break, Joseph seized the chance to provide some Rock N Roll piano as well as playing a duet with Mr. Sheehan which everybody seemed to enjoy. The competition concluded with impassioned speeches from Gabriel and Liam as they questioned Gibraltar's legitimacy in a post-Brexit world. A multi-lingual debate was held at the end of the competition to celebrate the diversity of languages of the participants and rather appropriately, the judges chose tricycles to be the topic of debate thanks to Tom's earlier joke. In the end, St Mark's did not progress to the national finals: being too unfamiliar with the format meant that the team occasionally slipped into the 'confrontational' style of a regular debate competition and thus could not progress. However, armed with this knowledge the team are keen to return next year fully prepared to win a decisive victory.

Godolphin & Latymer Debate Competition

St Mark's also entered two teams into the Godolphin and Latymer run debating competition in Hammersmith. Hugo Dawson and Henry Beesley made up the year 10 team whilst Alice Snell and Joe Gibson were entered for year 9. Both teams argued passionately for their motions having to debate on issues such as GCSE reform and female representation in sports. In the end the year 9 team had enormous success coming fourth out of the twenty-four other teams – an amazing result for their first competition at this level. It is a result of which all those who took part should be proud and given time they will indeed be a formidable team.

Joseph Nagle 12DRA



Becket

During Becket's charity event we attempted to inspire and motivate others so that they can help us raise money for charity as it is just unfair that we are out here celebrating special events whilst other people are suffering and that was 7 Becket's motivation and it turned out that we did exceptionally well. When we were raising money we tried to go full out and tried to do our best so that the people who are suffering can have the same joy and respect as we do.



7 Champion Bakes and Treats!



On Wednesday 6th February 7 Champion held an event in aid of Y7 charity week. We had an amazing bake sale and sold amazing treats. We had baked goods like cupcakes, muffins, brownies, chocolate biscuit cake, chocolate pizza and much more! Everyone in the form got involved and either made something to

sell, sold on the day or helped clean up. It was a solid team effort. People really seemed to enjoy them and we had a lot of fun helping out on the day. We raised almost £75!! It was a really enjoyable experience and for a great cause!



Clitherow

carefully planned and organised the selling of multi-coloured and themed lemonade; blue was Fortnite, green was slime, red was Valentine's, and yellow was classic. Some were tasked with making the poster, and others were tasked with buying the ingredients to make our themed lemonade. With a swarm of customers at break time and some



tough Clitherow bankers counting and guarding the money, we managed to raise just over £48!

We were happy to think that everyone's thirst was quenched that day and very proud for a first-time go at St Mark's Charities Week.

Year 7 Charity Week

Fisher

We sold Cheez-its which we bought online. We sold 10 Cheez-its for 50p. Due to this amazing idea we sold out! The smiles on people's faces were as bright as the sun. Because of this, many people brought at least 5 bags of Cheez-its in one go. The American crackers tasted really good. According to our customers Fisher had the best idea. Fisher would like to thank Mr Janman for approving the idea and buying the Cheez-its for us.



More



On a Monday, my form 7 More, created a popcorn sale for charities week. After choosing this idea from many more, we all collected all types of popcorn people could bring, sweet and salty, caramel, butter and many more. Even though my class was delayed due to many reasons such as a lack of popcorn we eventually managed to collect enough to sell. We sold it in smallish eco-friendly paper bags for £1. Alongside the popcorn we also sold homemade biscuits for 50p each. The sale was very chaotic but successful. It became very busy very quickly and we soon sold out of everything!



Pole

For 7 Pole's charity event we had a bake sale on a Thursday where we sold cakes, cupcakes, sweets, cookies and brownies. On the following Tuesday we also ran a games room. The activities included water pong, piñata, cookie decorating, table tennis and tombola. All together our bake sale and games room made an astonishing £105.

The preparation for the games room took a really long time. It took 4 weeks of talking about it but it was really nice that it all paid off. It was nice that people were playing the water pong as most of the time they couldn't succeed and that made for great laughs. There were also shocked faces when they first saw Ben's magic tricks. People participating in the cookie decorating had amazing ideas. The ping pong was well played and a delicious treat could be won, the piñata was also great fun watching people whack the piñata!.



Ethan and Amy



Celebrating Chinese New Year at Downing Street!

Standing outside Downing Street, I felt nervous but also very excited. There were around 60 children from all over the UK all dressed up in Chinese clothes waiting outside. Even though it was very cold, everyone was very cheerful. The thought of celebrating Chinese New Year with the Prime Minister made us warm inside.

For the first time ever, Chinese Spring Couplets were pasted on the door of 10 Downing street and beautiful red lanterns hung from cherry blossom trees in the street outside. It was just like in China, where people decorate their houses every year to celebrate the Spring Festival. Inside 10 Downing Street, it was beautiful too. Paintings of people from different periods in British history hung on the walls.

There were several massive rooms on each floor and the walls of the stairs were decorated with pictures of past prime ministers, complete with their signatures. Everything was so neat, not like my house at all. There were huge chandeliers in every room and ornate ceilings. The rooms were also decorated in a traditional Chinese style, with 'red pockets,' red lanterns, oranges and flowering Chinese trees, everywhere.

We were put in five different rooms for a variety of activities: Paper-cutting, calligraphy, paper dragon making and making clay zodiac animals. I was doing paper cutting when Prime Minister May came in to our room, she greeted everyone and sat at our table.

We introduced ourselves one by one. She listened and nodded with a smile on her face. Mrs May said our paper-cutting was beautiful. She even tried it herself, cutting out the Chinese character for 'Spring.' Her cutting was later auctioned and raised £3,500 for the UK Association for promoting Chinese Culture in the UK. After she left, one of the girls at my table said Mrs May was taller than she thought. Another girl said: 'Dur. Of course, she's tall. She's a grown up.'



We all agreed the Prime Minister spoke with a very posh voice. Isn't it amazing? I would never have thought I'd have the opportunity to do Chinese paper-cutting with the Prime Minister. It was fun. Everyone was chatting and laughing. After we finished our activities, we had some snacks brought in by chefs with massive white hats and waiters wearing white gloves, just like you see on the telly. We watched a traditional Chinese Lion Dance and talked to lots of VIP guests invited by Mrs May. I was also picked to represent my group giving a Chinese New Year card to the Prime Minister. When I gave it to her, I said Happy New Year in Chinese, Xin Nian Kuai Le and she said happy Chinese New Year back to me and smiled.



I enjoyed meeting the children, the Prime Minister and all the different Chinese teachers from around the UK. It was an amazing experience and I think I was lucky to be there.

By Keesha Bestic

SLAPTON LEY FIELDTRIP

For the A level course in Geography, students must produce a set of Field Work, based either on an Urban or Coastal location. To set the year 12 students up for this task, the class headed down to Slapton Ley Field Centre for a four-day course, preparing them for this task and giving those hoping to study coasts the opportunity to collect vital data whilst the students studying the Urban side of the course got a chance to test out their data collection methods in Plymouth.

The first day there ended up being the coldest of the trip with snow falling in the surrounding fields and providing freezing temperatures for the excursion into Plymouth. The group tested out a range of methods from questionnaires, pedestrian counts and Environmental quality surveys whilst also getting a chance to explore the historic naval city with a particular highlight being the Barbican and Harbour front.



The following days saw the group take trips down to the coast in order to investigate the various processes at work in Start Bay. Students measured the incline of the beach as well as the rate of longshore drift and even analysed sediment samples back in the field centre laboratory. By the end the weather had improved and the class had all certainly come closer together, having worked together on each other's projects.

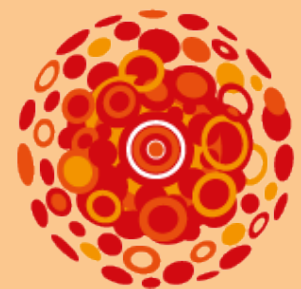
Joseph Nagle, 12DRA

Although the cold, wet English countryside may seem worlds apart from the arid landscape of South India, it ended up being the backdrop for the Expedition's practice weekend. The group of intrepid explorers set off from school on Friday, making their own way down to Brockenhurst in the New Forest, prepared for a weekend of trekking, trangias and team building. The first night proved successful with both groups managing to cook themselves supper (that was actually edible) without setting the campsite alight. The following day saw the groups up bright and early ready for their excursion into the New Forest. After walking 15km – a journey that entailed several 'incidents' involving some mud, mud and a slightly thicker variation of mud – the group returned to camp for a slap-up meal. The evening proved more problematic with 50 mph winds claiming one tent and rendering the others cold and rather wet (well for one chemistry teacher anyway). The final morning saw the groups say their goodbyes and left them excited for their forthcoming adventure.



By Joseph Nagle 12DRA and Eliza Fatscher 12PMO

India Practice Weekend



The Big Bang

UK Young Scientists & Engineers Fair

Livia – I enjoyed the GSK show because it informed me about bacteria.

Carolina – I felt rewarded from all the freebies! Especially the army dog tags (creds to Esther!) Very fun experience.

Tia I enjoyed the weirdology show because it showed us some interesting chemical reactions

Sian – I enjoyed the technician prospectus stall because we had to do four tasks for a reward and certificate (Thank you to all the teachers)



Jersie – I enjoyed everything! It was the best day out with my friends, also having fun with the teachers and exploring new things.

Esther – I really enjoyed the National Geographic Show (even though it was weird) Also I want to thank Mr Bamrolia, Mr Windmill, Miss Davies and Mr Savage for taking the time to accompany us.

Karron – Today I enjoyed watching the shows on the stage and the workshops. Mostly I enjoyed learning about STEM careers that I could do in the future and it changed my perspective on science. I would definitely recommend this trip to anyone.



Evelyn – today I really enjoyed a lot of the workshops especially the Specsavers and GSK ones as they were very educational and very engaging. It was a very worthwhile trip and I would definitely recommend it. Thank you to all the teachers who organised the trip and came with us.



Magdalena – Today I really enjoyed the weirdology and the deadly diseases shows. The workshops were very interesting. I learnt a lot of new facts. I would recommend this trip to anyone interested in STEM. Thank you to the teachers who organised this.

Lily – I enjoyed the two shows especially the second one. I also really liked going around the stalls as they have given me lots more options and career choices I want to find out more about. It was a great trip.

Rachel – I enjoyed going around the different stands the most because we were able to talk to people and try experiments instead of just being told about the different careers. I was able to also see jobs that I had never even heard of which gave me more variety to choose

Britney – My favourite part of the Big Bang Experience was designing an effective windmill that would be lightweight and would catch air easily as I enjoy D&T. I also enjoyed talking about period positivity, it is natural! The trip help me to understand possible careers and I would highly recommend it.



Maria – I enjoyed the problem solving activities as it encouraged me to think

Anna-Marie – today I enjoyed the accelerator, gastronaut weirdology and deadly diseases. It was lots of fun and I learnt a lot about STEM and careers. Thanks to all the

Charlayne – I enjoyed the different activities at the GSK stand as well as the deadly diseases show. I learnt a lot about our lungs, breathing and mosquitos. I also learnt new things such as why our bodies do certain things during the weirdology show. Overall the Big Bang Fair had lots of things to offer and it was an interesting trip.



Jenerly – We went to the big bang fair, we learnt a lot of things for example Weirdology. I enjoyed looking through the VR and asking questions to GSK about mosquitos, I found out the mosquitos are attracted to smell and not blood .



Tinkle – I enjoyed the deadly diseases and the weirdology shows. I enjoyed learning about all of the different careers in Stem. I would recommend anyone who wants to learn about STEM to go.



Olive – I enjoyed the GSK show as it was very interactive and interesting. I learnt a lot about different diseases especially malaria. I also enjoyed the GSK stand where we go to ask questions about mosquitos and also got a free wristband!

Samuela – I learnt a lot of new things today such as breaking computer codes and a workshop about how germs are spread. It was really educational. The most interesting part of the big bang fair was the air force plane simulator, as I would like to join the Airforce.





House Cake Competition



On the 12th January the St Mark's Bronze DoE team met bright and early in Richmond Park. We met in our groups assigned to us beforehand. We all got two teachers per group who would be with us for the beginning of the route and the end. We set off at different times with slightly different routes to follow.

My group had the pleasure of having Mr Sheehan and Mr Fanning with us, we set off walking, making many dog friends along the way. We have ten different checkpoints that we had to pass and some successfully made it, our group not so much! Sadly we got slightly lost and didn't make it back until an hour after the other groups had all finished.



Even though it was cold and windy our spirits were high. We had lunch in the park and despite the blisters and bruises on our feet the overall experience was enjoyable. Hopefully our group will learn from our mistakes!!

Rosie Robertson



ART CLUB IS BACK!

Art Club is back, bigger, louder and dare I say more F. U. N! Thanks to the wonderful Zuzanna Rozanska and Klaudia Zaporowska who have taken over the teaching of Y7 Art Club this year. Zuzanna and Klaudia or better known as Zooz & Zap are no strangers to the art department having achieved outstanding grades in art GCSE by burning live meat sculptures and exhibiting severed limbed dolls they are also original members of the first Y7 art club run by a less bald Mr Hook back in 2010. It is great to see two fantastic, energetic people having experienced the benefits of an art education wanting to give back to the youngest in our school so they too can have the opportunity to explore the world around them and develop themselves creatively. Plus you get to make printed Christmas cards! Next term I have been told that Zoozzap are planning for Y7s to make life size sculptures of each other and there will be the addition of free cake every week. That's every Thursday 3 - 4 in rm 19. No experience required: you just need to want to have fun and eat cake.



Cupid's Day

This year Cupid's Day fell on February 15th. The aim of this day is to raise money for charity and spread a message of love throughout the school, however, in order to achieve the final outcome, weeks of preparation were needed. The Year 12 Year Council, of which I am a member, came together to organise the event. We sat each lunchtime taking orders for gifts which students could choose to send to a friend they cared about. These included a rose, chocolates, a choice of poems accompanied by a chocolate coin, a cuddly toy and a marshmallow heart. Customers ranged from those in Year seven to Sixth Formers. Some gifts were a genuine declaration of love and affection; others were sent to celebrate friendship and bring a smile.

On the days leading up to Cupid's Day, many pain-staking hours were spent sorting the gifts and shopping in order to accommodate the last minute influx of orders so that they were ready to be delivered on the Friday morning.

On Friday morning we went out like a host of Cupids, some even with wings, armed with roses and a range of other special gifts, into the school, ready to spread the love. The Year Council travelled from class to class, leaving behind them a path of joy. In total, Cupid's Day raised nearly £100 and we are grateful to all those who took part. We learnt a lot about supply and demand and how much effort goes into organising a successful fundraising event, but most of all we hope to have celebrated something that is at the heart of our school – LOVE and CARE!

Jonathan George, 12RCH



We have supported Fairtrade Fortnight at St Mark's School for a number of years and this year was no exception. Fairtrade Fortnight 2019 ran from 25 February 2019 – 10 March.

Fairtrade Fortnight is the time of the year when

campaigners, businesses, schools like ours and places of worship show support for the farmers and workers who grow our food in developing countries.

The theme of the campaign this year was: SHE DESERVES A LIVING INCOME – since although many farmers, both men and women, are underpaid and exploited – for women who work in the fields and in the home, it's even worse. The Fairtrade Foundation says studies show that if you increase women's independent income, the outcomes for the whole community improve. It was a timely campaign as International Women's Day also fell during Fairtrade Fortnight.

Our Faith in Action class led the activities in school. Reception was decorated with our Fairtrade banner and posters displaying the faces of women farmers who, as the campaign says, deserve a living income.

We put together a lively assembly for the Lower and Upper School that involved some role play – a daunting prospect at first – BUT we all pulled together to give the message successfully. For two weeks we sold Divine Fairtrade chocolate and that money will be donated to our Fairtrade charities. In form groups students had the opportunity to watch a film about the difficulties cocoa farmers face and we remembered them in our prayers. We thank all those who supported us (especially Mrs Ferguson) and hope

as we purchase our next bar of chocolate we will be mindful of the benefits of fair trade.

Raúl Saib and Tom Moreland



ST MARK'S



On Wednesday 30th January the St Mark's Senior Female football team braved the elements and took on the challenge of the annual borough tournament, held at the Heathland School. After victorious performances against the likes of Heathland, Lampton and Brentford School, plus a valiant effort to secure a

draw against Gumley, it came down to the final match to determine the winners of the tournament. In the dying moments of the game, Alice McGann's sweetly-struck corner was met with a low volley which glided into the corner of the net (by myself, of course) ultimately securing our final win and thus crowning us as the Hounslow Borough Champions (again!). Well done girls!

By Ciara John

YEAR 7 GIRLS' BOROUGH FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT

On Tuesday 26th February, the Hounslow Girls' Borough football tournament took place at The Heathland School. The tournament was open to all of the secondary schools in the Borough with the likes of Gumley House, Heathland and Spring West Academy all competing to be crowned Borough Champions.

St Mark's had a big enough squad to enter 2 teams in the competition but the rules state that we must play each other in the group stages. This was a highly anticipated match with no one holding back and both teams playing for the win. The A team managed a victory and remained undefeated in the group stages which led to a semi-final encounter with Heathland.

The semi-final could be described as tough and gritty to say the least! We had previously drawn with Heathland in the league game so we knew we had to play well. The game was tight but eventually St Mark's grabbed a crucial goal to send us into the final against a formidable Gumley team.

Gumley House had beaten us in the league and were full of confidence but we weren't going to give up just because they'd beaten us once! During the match, Gumley continuously tried to break through the defence but St Mark's and several heroic saves from Joy Soriano, left them frustrated and goalless. St Mark's managed a few counter attacks but the game ended 0-0 which meant the game would be decided on penalties!

St Mark's were first to take and it was 1-0 which settled our nerves. 2 heroic saves from Joy Soriano over the next few attempts left Gumley needing to score their next shot..... and they missed!!! St Mark's had triumphed and claimed victory against the odds and were crowned Borough Champions, much to Gumley's displeasure!

By Emma Nagle 7CA



SPORT



National Junior Indoor Rowing Championships (NJIRC)

After another year working in partnership with London Youth Rowing, we entered the National Junior Indoor Rowing Championships held at the Copper Box in the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.

The event involves a series of individual and relay races with over 2000 students taking part from across the country.

The star performance came from Olivia Richards who ended up finishing 5th nationally! Well done to her and all those who took part.

Students should now look out for some water rowing sessions in the summer – please ask Mr Taylor for more details.



Year 9 basketball success

Congratulations to the Year 9 basketball team who secured the title of Borough Champions after beating Isleworth and Syon 77 -63 in their final game of the season.

St. Mark's started strongly with Alex Omuvwie playing a key role in rebounding and scoring key baskets.

The squad then went into half time with a good lead but then had to hold off an Isleworth fightback in the 3rd quarter before securing the win in the final quarter. Other noteworthy performances can from Pietro Nobili and Arvin Angeles-Carlos.

Well done to the whole squad on a successful season!



HOUSE ART COMPETITION



*Wallace Fernandes
8 Champion*

Winner Year 7/8

*Nadia Urlik
Champion*

Winner Year 9



*Charmin Mariano
Champion*

Runner up Year 9



*Ellen Duenas
8 Fisher*

Runner up Year 7/8