

# VERITAS

St Mark's Catholic School

No. 30 - SPRING 2023







Back in November, I was invited to attend the Jack Petchey Workshop along with many other students from my year. As someone who has never really left my comfort zone, I felt extremely nervous when told we had to deliver a short speech by the end of the day. However, I was supported by a lovely mentor, who helped us learn the key features of delivering a speech, such as to keep the pace, tone, and to smile. We also went through a range of mini tasks which eventually prepared us for our speech. After delivering my speech, with a few stutters here and there, I was absolutely shocked to have been placed in the top 3 that day.

But this also meant that I had to do further preparations for the next round: The Assembly Final. Leading up to the assembly finals, me and five other students who passed the last round worked incredibly hard to improve our speeches, aiding each other with critical feedback and encouraging affirmations. But I was absolutely flabbergasted to have won the assembly final. I believe delivering a speech in front of a whole year group is one

of the most daunting tasks for a student, so I am extremely proud of myself and all the students who performed.

Being part of the Jack Petchey Speak Out Challenge, which aims to give a voice to young people, I am thankful to have been equipped with such vital skills to help me in the future. On the day of the regional final, which was held at Brentford School For Girls, I was introduced to the rest of the regional finalists a few hours before the actual event started. I was so excited to meet other students who have worked equally as hard as I have. We spent time learning about each others speeches and worked on preparing them for our final performance. I am incredibly grateful to have worked with such talented people. Then it came to the final performance. Standing up on that stage, I was able to express myself in ways I never knew I could, and even though I think I could have done better, I am proud of myself for finishing in second place.

My speech was titled, ‘Take The Risk’ and I chose to do this speech because I realised that if I hadn’t taken the risk, I wouldn’t have been able to go up on that stage and speak with a voice I never knew I had. I believe that taking the risk is a concept that is achievable by anyone. Being where I am right now, I am glad I took the risk.

Thank you!

- Dianne

# Jack Petchey's "SPEAK OUT" Challenge!

On Tuesday 28th February, Dianne Carino in Year 10, took part in the Jack Petchey Speak out Challenge Regional Hounslow final, being held at Brentford School for Girls.

15 young people from schools across the Borough took part in the competition. Six judges listened to each speech and were awarding points on content, structure and delivery. The standard was incredibly high.

I am pleased to announce that Dianne's speech titled 'Take the risk' was delivered with conviction, passion and emotion and she was placed runner up in the competition! A fantastic achievement to place 2nd out of 15!

Well done Dianne for all your hard work and many congratulations!

#JackPetcheyspeakoutchallenge



Welcome to our Spring Edition of Veritas which reflects another very busy and successful term at St. Mark's. At the end of last term, we celebrated the outstanding examination results achieved at GCSE and A Level at our Prizegiving Ceremony, and it was a privilege to welcome back two former Headteachers of St. Mark's - Paul Enright (2001 – 2018) and David Sheath (1986 – 2001). The event was particularly special because we have been unable to hold Prizegiving for the past 3 years, and Mr Sheath told me that pre-Covid he had attended every Prizegiving since 1978!



St. Mark's has a long tradition of excellence, and the popularity of our school is demonstrated by the 1149 applications for admission into Year 7 next September.

Alongside academic success, our vision to ensure that all members of the community fulfil their God-given potential is also reflected in our distinctive Catholic ethos, dedicated pastoral care and participation in the wide-ranging activities offered beyond the curriculum. I hope you will enjoy reading about these activities in this edition. On behalf of all the staff, I wish you and your families a very happy and holy Easter.





On Friday 20th January St Mark's welcomed Lynne Snowdon, a representative from the organisation 'Animal Aid' for a live cookery demonstration and presentation on vegetarianism/veganism.



# Chess Club

The chess and games club has become exceedingly popular this term. We have had to use two classrooms to accommodate the number of pupils attending on Fridays after school.

In addition to chess there are a range of games available for all to play, including Scrabble, Carcassonne, Cluedo. All pupils and staff are welcome both beginners and anyone who wants to learn any of the games. The club convenes every Friday in \$5 after school until 4-00 pm.

The photos show Mr Crone playing simultaneous games with three of the students.



**Friday 17th March saw our second annual House chess tournament take place in the main hall after school. Each of the six houses provided a minimum of 5**

**students from year 7 to 11. Students play two 20 minute games with each round seeing 30 games being played at once. Champion were the overall winners with Clitherow second, only a point in front of third place Pole.**

**Well done to all those students who took part.**

# House Chess Tournament







In January of this year, two groups of year 9 students were given an amazing opportunity to visit Sky Studios and take part in an immersive learning experience. In the bespoke TV studios, students were able to use cutting edge technology and state of the art equipment to create their own fiction trailers. Working alongside experts, students worked in small groups taking on real life media roles including: a director, a camera operator, actors and an editor. At the end of the session students were provided with a private screening of their trailers - all of which were absolutely phenomenal.

As well as creating their own trailers, students were also given the opportunity to have a sneak peek inside Sky Studios and were able to witness first hand a live recording of Sky News. This



provided students with great insight into all of the work that goes on behind the scenes and to learn about all the different roles in the studios.

Overall, it was a hugely successful and enjoyable trip! Our year

9 students were able to learn a lot of new skills and understand how the world of media works.



## What was the most enjoyable aspect of the trip and why?

Collaborating with my friends to create a short trailer because it was fun to share ideas and come up with a story.



*Creating a trailer with others because we were able to dress up and edit our trailers.*

Making the trailer for the movie because we learnt how to edit and how to use sounds and cameras.

*Creating the short film. This is because it was fun to create new ideas and some of the moments creating it led to funny and memorable moments.*

Recording our trailers because everyone in my group was joining in and we were all creating it.



## What new skills did you learn from this trip?

I learned how to effectively communicate ideas and incorporate everyone's thoughts.

*I learnt how to edit and how Sky Studios films Sky news reports etc.*

How to operate a camera and see how a green screen works

*I learnt how to add sound and edit a piece of film.*

I learnt more about how to create a film and how to edit it to make it better.



## Would you recommend this trip to your peers? Why/why not?

I would because not only is it a great way to look into future careers, but it also helps build your confidence in a fun way.

*I would recommend it since it is fun and you can learn how to make movie trailers, you can also see what sky studios is about and what's around the place, you can see the studios used for interviews and that's where famous people come.*

Yes, I would recommend this trip because you get to learn a couple of new things such as: how to operate a camera, how to edit the videos, how to write a script properly, how to act and how to direct the whole thing (if you get picked as director.)

*I would recommend this trip as it's fun, and you can show your own ideas and collaborate successfully in a group.*





# PEER MENTORING

Our highly successful Peer Mentoring programme is up and running for 2023.

We have a wonderful group of year 9 Peer Mentors who applied to this important role of responsibility in the school.

Last half term they successfully completed their in depth anti-bullying and peer listener training.

They have now begun to meet with groups of Year 7 students every Monday morning.

In this mentoring time, the Year 9s are support the Year 7s as they continue to adjust and transition into the challenges and opportunities of Secondary School.

Our Year 7 students said ' I really enjoyed getting to know our mentors. They asked about we felt about school. We had fun and they were kind'

Our Year 9 Peer Mentors said ' I enjoy Peer Mentoring because we make sure the Year 7s know we are all here to help and support them by giving tips on things they may struggle with like homework, keeping track of their diaries and even more. Just seeing them communicate and happy always brightens up my Monday morning!

*Here are our Peer Mentors proudly showing off their badges!*



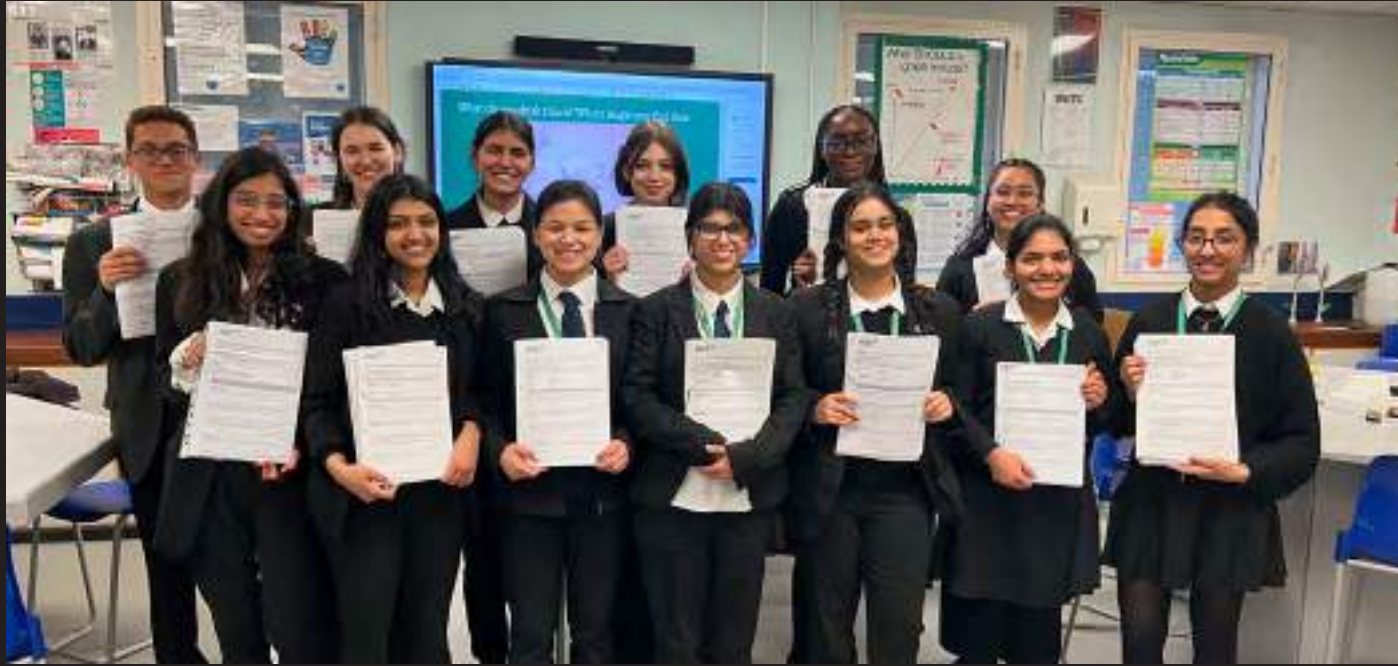
At the beginning of March Mrs McGhee's Faith In Action class undertook their fundraising opportunity in the form of

selling Krispy Kreme doughnuts. In total, they sold 423 Krispy Kreme original glazed doughnuts, and from that, they made £159 profit which came down to a result of great planning, teamwork, and advertising. Mrs McGhee played a significant role as a project manager in which she delegated roles and responsibilities in order to ensure full commitment and planning was put into the project. To advertise, they created multiple different posters by hand (see photo) to put around the school which allowed them to maximise customers and minimise the risk of buying too many doughnuts before the sale. This Faith In Action campaign was able to successfully take place due to the dedicated teamwork, through this they were able to decide what plans were optimal for the sale and which opportunities would best contribute to their project. As a result of these factors, there were many happy customers such as Zygy in Yr 12 who stated "it was a great way to give back as well as indulge in delicious doughnuts, it's great to see it back after Covid." He also stated that "the whole process was very organised and the service was excellent." Thank you to all those who bought doughnuts including many members of staff!





# The Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)



The EPQ project process is a research-based qualification that is equivalent to half an A-level. It is an opportunity for students to delve deeper into a topic of their interest and demonstrate academic skills by completing a 5000-word report.

The EPQ process typically involves the following:

1. Choosing a topic: Students can decide whether they will pursue a topic they are passionate about and somehow relate to their studies.
2. Conducting extensive research: Once settled on a topic, EPQ students carry out an investigation by using a diverse range of resources such as books, journals and websites where they use the data to analyse their report.
3. Creating a 5000-word report where they can demonstrate their findings.
4. Presenting the project: Students do this at the end where they can showcase the summary of their findings, journey, what they have learned about themselves and a Q&A.

Throughout it all, there will be a logbook that is routinely updated that describes the circumstance of the project. The taught sessions, part of the EPQ process, are where teachers offer guidance on how to handle areas like presentation, reference, organisation, and academic writing — skills that are transferable and valuable in all facets of post-secondary education.

By Maida Ejaz

Wow! What a journey it's been. A journey that started for some of us in the summer of Year 11 and ended in the Easter of Year 13, the EPQ journey has been a long but fruitful process. From the skills I developed (such as writing an academic paper and presentation skills) to the independent research that dominated the EPQ project, this is not for the weak. Anyone can do it, as long as you have a passion for the topic you choose and can persevere to the end. It has been time well spent. The variety of skills gained from the EPQ project will give me and my EPQ class a head start to university. One bonus being that some universities value EPQs so highly, you could get lowered entry requirements!

But I would not have been able to do this alone. I would especially like to thank, Dr Chakraborty (Centre Co-ordinator) and Mr Fanning (my supervisor) for all their time and effort, and most importantly, their support, which motivated me to push through my struggles. The EPQ journey is reflective; You learn more about yourself, your strengths your weaknesses and most importantly, you love for your topic. By the end of the journey, you will be very proud of yourself. Besides, who wouldn't want to be an expert in their chosen field of study? A mini-PhD if you like!

By Esther Colaco

After a year of hard work, dedication, and hours of research, we have finally completed our Extended Project Qualification (or else known as the EPQ)! Our journey started in Year 12 when we could individually select an area of interest to research; this ranged from medicine to computer science and even to my topic on the Bible. Candidates were able to choose the question they would answer in their 5000-word report; then used an array of skills which included reference and bibliography taking, sourcing and research making, all learnt through the help of online courses and Dr Chakraborty's guidance! These fantastic academic skills will undoubtedly help us on our journeys through university. A major requirement for candidates was to fill and complete a logbook, a digital document, which recorded all of our thought processes, struggles, challenges and accomplishments, whether it be in regard to our organisation or the content of our report itself. Another huge aspect of the EPQ was the presentation! Though standing up in front of a large audience including the Head Teacher, Ms Waugh-Lucas, members of the SLT, my supervisor Ms Joyce and other teachers and students for 25 minutes may seem daunting to some. However, many of us EPQ students were bursting with energy and excitement to talk about our passions for the subject we chose and, of course and to answer questions. It must be said that all of us candidates are extremely proud and relieved to have preserved through it all and to have conquered the mighty EPQ!

By Christina Dolan

The following 13 students have successfully completed their Extended Project Qualification: Esther Colaco, Ayoka D'Costa, Christina Dolan, Kaelyn D'Souza, Maida Ejaz, Maria Gonsalves, Aleena Habbie, Olive Igbokwuwe, Evelyn James, Kaell Kanagarasa, Anna-Marie McGhee, Carolina Perello-Javar and Olsha Rodrigues

Well done to all of them!

Thank you also to all the Supervisors who have supported them over the year:

Mr Fanning, Mr Fisher, Ms Joyce, Mrs Thomas, Mrs Millin, Mr Sheehan, Mr Crone, Mr Windmill, Ms O'Connell, Ms McIntyre

By Dr Chakraborty  
EPQ Coordinator  
6th Form Extension and Enhancement







# Year 9 Geography Exploding Volcano Project



I most enjoyed the **creative freedom** we had to create the volcanoes and how we could add characteristics, such as secondary vents and different backdrops.

The aspect of **building and designing** the volcano with my **friends** was amazing. It allowed me to use creative but to also ideas to better improve it which gave me a satisfactory feeling.

Creating the volcano and listening to how other people did it was interesting as there are so many methods to create a simple volcano. **Spending time with the class** and seeing whose exploded more and **listening to people laugh** made you realise how much time you should be spending with people and creating things rather than online all the time.

I most enjoyed the **creative and collaborative freedom** that came along with the volcano project. This included the option to base it off of any volcano we wished or to simply make one only our minds could think of.

I enjoyed how we **worked in groups** and **brainstormed ideas**. It was fun thinking about **creative ways** in which we could add more to the volcano to make it realistic.

I enjoyed the **explosion** I would do it again!  
10 out of 10.

When adding labels it gave me a **clear understanding** of how a **volcano is structured**.

It helped me understand the **various types of lava** that can erupt from **different volcanoes** (e.g. composite volcanoes have lava with high viscosity).

The **GEOCHALLENGE** was an interesting task that required me to look at the **qualities of our volcano in depth**. Additionally filling in the accompanying sheet and going through the labels, identifying where they should be placed, was also a task that helped my understanding of volcanoes.

It helped me understand the **structure of volcanoes** and what **types of volcanoes** from at each plate boundary. Also, I learned the **silica content** of lava for each type of volcano.

What did students learn from the project?

Creating a volcano has built up my **confidence of understanding different parts of volcanoes, lava and eruptions** as we had a visual 3D presentation right in front of us.

By using baking soda and vinegar or coke and mentos, it represents the type of lava that specifically comes from a composite or shield volcano.

To make the volcano realistic we had to take into consideration the type of lava flow, shape, height in comparison to real volcanoes.

It helped me **visualise** how a volcano erupts.

What did students enjoy the most about the project?

I enjoyed **making** the volcano and **exploding** it and also seeing other people's designing talents.

What I enjoyed the most about this project is the **making of the volcano**. I think it was **really fun** and **educational**. Plus, I was able to **spend more time with my family**.

## Take a look at some of the fantastic designs & eruptions...







On the Thursday 9th of January 2023 St Marks were able to begin the new year with the splendid opportunity of having Mr Eric Knowles present at a Life after St Mark's to students who were keen to listen to the experiences and journey of his career path. Having been seen on numerous programmes: currently a presenter on Bargain Hunt BBC's Antique Roadshow, as well as a contestant on Celebrities TaskMaster. Appearing

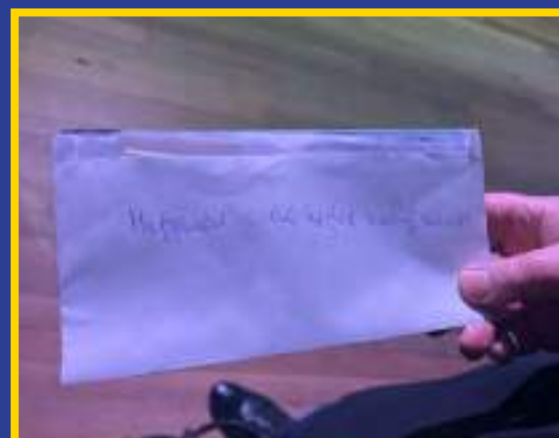
## Life after St Mark's

on numerous programmes and involved in many prestigious roles and responsibilities, we were especially grateful that Mr Knowles took the time to provide us his insight into his highly decorated career as a TV presenter and antique expert.

With great charisma and words of wisdom, Mr Knowles enlightened us with his past, starting with his humble beginnings in the small town of Nelson to the leadup of being discovered for Antiques Roadshow. He explained to us the importance of his most memorable antiques and we were fortunate to take advice from a man who has a proven track record of numerous accomplishments. His valuable insight was endless - as shown by the talk lasting 30 minutes longer than intended - but every extra second was worthwhile. Perhaps the most important lesson Mr Knowles taught us was to never stop learning: to stay intellectually curious and harness your interests and passions. On behalf of the students at St Mark's we give our greatest thanks to Mr Knowles for his time.



By Raiden Human and Chloe Deocampo 12 Maple



On Thursday 23rd March 2023 we welcomed former students, Fiona Macwan, Virtue Igbokuwe and Abigail Agyemang to the 'Life of St Mark's' talks. They delivered extremely inspirational presentations, and we really appreciated them coming back to talk to our current students.

Fiona graduated as Biochemist, BSc from the University of Kent currently working in medical communications as a Senior Account Manager at Prime Global.

Virtue is currently working as a Civil Engineer and has completed an integrated Masters degree in engineering, MEng, from the University of Southampton achieving 1st class.

Abigail is currently a Doctoral Researcher studying for a PhD in Psychology and Education at the University of Cambridge. Before Cambridge, Abigail completed a 4-year integrated Masters degree (MSci) in Psychology at Royal Holloway, University of London (RHUL), graduating with a First Class.







On the evening of Friday 3rd March 2023, my A level drama class and our teacher Ms Hutchison headed to The University of West London to watch the third year acting students perform their final piece as part of their degree course. Their devised performance was called, 'Stories in a pub about a soldier that came back from the war.'

Before we set off we were all excited to see work at a higher level as this devised piece could give us some inspiration for our own performance work. Before the performance began, we were given a tour of the campus. Things on the tour that really stood out to me was learning that Freddie Mercury was an alumni, also the fake courtroom setup was very interesting. The whole uni seemed to have a sector to appeal to anyone's interests. The performance was set in the small theatre opposite the Student Union. It told a story, presented



through the eyes of a range of different characters. It was very interesting with lots of contrast of emotions throughout and contained elements of comedy and tragedy that were portrayed so professionally. The overall piece was very engaging and well thought out, keeping the audience entertained and conveying the story so beautifully. A few of the stand out moments that I can remember were; one being the truly spectacular impersonation of Danni Monogue by Chippy Brown. He was hilarious and had Zygy Lopez-Dyrka in absolute stitches! Another was the amazing puppetry and portrayal of the wolf by Sofia Orfanou. Two actors whose performances particularly stood out to me were Ellen Chelepis and George Quint. Their portrayal of the twins was impressive. Their acting was so eloquent and engaging and provided much comedic relief. Overall the whole cast were incredibly professional and enthralling.

Quotes from other students about the trip:

"I thoroughly enjoyed the devised piece, especially the comedic relief" ~ Bartek Szostak

"I really enjoyed touring the university. It enabled me to explore what uni is like and how inclusive the university was to all ages". ~ Zygy Lopez-Dyrka



"I really enjoyed the piece and it was really inspiring to see as at the moment I am working on devising myself" ~ Gizelle Furtado

The overall trip was wonderful, everyone was extremely kind to us and a great experience was had by all!



# SPEED READ

On Monday 6th March, me and a few other pupils in my year attended Isleworth and Syon School to

participate in their Speed Read Challenge.

The day started off with myself, Phildena D'Mello, Alona Vince, Reece Evans, Luke Donnelly, Leo Preknica, Luke Bestic and Alex Kubinksy, along with Ms Harris and Ms Quigley travelling to the school via the bus.

Once we got there, we went to the reception and then made our way to their main hall. Our school was one of the first there so we didn't know what to expect. After a couple of minutes other schools started making their way there. Once all of the schools taking part had finally made it, Tony Dallas introduced himself and had said how amazing it was to finally see this event take place after the impact Covid-19 had. He started the event off by letting us play a few games to introduce ourselves to each other. He even asked teachers to participate. A few of the games he made us do was ordering ourselves via- age, birthdays, shoe size and our names from alphabetical order. It was quite fun, we even got to know people who had the same birthdays and people who had awkward shoe sizes.

He then told us how this Speed read challenge was going to work and made sure we didn't have any speeches prepared and said we should be passionate about the book we have chosen. I could tell some of us were nervous but when it kicked off we really got into it.

When we started everyone was quite shy at first but nearly five minutes later everyone got the hang of things everyone talked about their books and after the first batch of people were done those who were listening got to vote on their favourite book. This went on until everyone had voted and had a chance to talk about their book.

After a small break the main people who held the event came



to gather everyone around to distribute some prizes. A few people in St. Mark's and other schools got prizes for the most votes for their book but the craziest prize was won by Luke Bestic for the wildest haircut. The main purpose of this event was to talk about our favourite books and to expand each other's knowledge of books and of

course to have fun. This whole day was a great experience for everyone and we thank the teachers who walked us through the event and introduced us to it.

When we got back to school Ms Quigley gave us all a free book to keep as a memoir of this amazing trip.

All in all this trip was so fun and we are so happy that we got to have this experience that not many people get and it wouldn't have been possible without Ms Harris and Ms Quigley.

Written by Phildena D'Mello and Alona Vince.







We welcomed Jennifer Gibbs and Alex Gibbs back to St Mark's on Wednesday 8th March for a lunchtime Careers Q & A. Jennifer left St Mark's in 2015 and her brother Alex was a student at St Mark's from 2010 - 2017. Well done to Niamh, from Year 9, who did a fantastic job of asking the questions. Jennifer studied A



There were many Media and Film students in the audience, after school on Wednesday 8th March, to listen to former student Ethan Barrett (2012 - 2017) tell us about his journey to becoming a FilmMaker and Director. Ethan studied English Literature, Drama and Film as A Levels and went on to study Film at the University of Westminster. Ethan shared some of the films he has made - with the budgets ranging from £50 to a commissioned advert with a budget of £5,000!

***CORRECTION - £500,000 not £5,000! There is a big difference between £500,000 and £5,000. Apologies to our former student Ethan Barrett. We reported in our recent Spring CEIAG newsletter that Ethan, who kindly came into school to school to***



***speak to students during National Careers Week, had worked on a commissioned advert with a budget of £5,000 - this was a HUGE error - the budget was indeed an amazing £500,000.***



Former student Adelle Desouza, who left St Mark's in 2008, came into school to meet with Year 12 students. Adelle now works in cybersecurity, but has also set up HireHigher - a business committed to providing early careers opportunities for young people.

On 22nd March, a group of Year 12 students will take part in an event, organised by HireHigher, that provides the students with an opportunity to



chat with recent graduates and apprentices; gain personal insight on strengths; find out about mock assessment centres and have a tour of a multi million pound data centre facility.

Levels in Biology, Chemistry and Physics and is now a Veterinary Surgeon. Alex studied A Levels in Economics, Government and Politics and Geography and went on to study Geography at Southampton University. Alex is now a Research Analyst.



Community Sports Trust

Sam Hackney-Ring, from Brentford FC Community Sports Trust, came to



speak about careers in Sport and the community, as well as the opportunities on offer for young people at Brentford FC Community Sports Trust. Sam encouraged students, interested in pursuing careers in sports, to consider coaching qualifications.





## CONNECTIONS

The theme this year for British Science Week was 'Connections'!

The idea was to engage pupils by discussing how connections happen between people, animals, in construction and engineering, countries and other things in their everyday lives.

*What are good examples of connections?*

## GLIDER COMPETITION

The connections between the forces of flight allow an aircraft to soar – you can't have one force without the others! In this activity, pupils had to understand and master the forces of flight to design a go-further paper glider which optimizes lift and lessens drag to fly further and better! Mr McCormick and his Science club enthusiasts trailed this activity with varying results - some of the pupils managed to build gliders which covered a good area and used the principles of flight but others barely took off.

The winner of the actual glider competition was Sophie Amponsah (7 Pole) who demonstrated that she understood the principles of forces in designing her model. She was happy to receive an Easter egg for her fantastic effort!

If you are interested in designing your own glider at home, please see the link below.

BUILD A BROOKLANDS GLIDER  
page 12

<https://www.britishscienceweek.org/app/uploads/2023/01/Secondary-Activity-Pack-2023-British-Science-Week.pdf>



## DISSECTIONS

The Science week 2023 at St. Mark's really kicked off on Monday after school when pupils were given an opportunity to participate in 3 highly engaging activities.

Mr Crone and Ms Lewis had many students using scalpel and other cutting instruments with great care in order to carry out

a pigs-trotter dissection. This dissection allowed pupils to see a joint in action, as well as two kinds of connective tissue that help movement of bones and muscles; ligaments and tendons. In addition they examined the cross section cut of the trotter where it was removed from the leg, allowing the pupils to identify the differences in texture

between muscle, cartilage, bone, and tendons. Great care was taken in using the sharp instruments as this was the first time some of the younger ones had used scalpels.

Ms Kingsland was also looking at a dissection with another group.

By dissecting a fish head, students get to learn about the internal and external anatomy of a fish. They got to see inside a fish, first hand, and gain invaluable hands-on experience of dissection.

The first thing step was to place the fish on its side and locate the boney plate which protects the gills. They then cut the plate away from its base to expose the gills and then removed them by cutting them at the upper and lower attachments. They then removed the eye, cut through the cornea and extracted the lens. The students then had the opportunity to appreciate that the lens is relatively large in size, and relate this to the importance of the eye to the fish.

The pupils showed excellent engagement in learning about the importance of practical work in the lab. It is at the heart of science, and is used to support and consolidate scientific concepts. It also develops investigating techniques and helps build, and master practical skills.





# CODEBREAKING

Mr McCormick was again in action leading a 'Codebreaking' class. Here pupils were asked to figure out the secret messages hidden in the codes.

They also examined the history of code breaking including the Enigma machine during WW2 and the importance of morse coding. The students devised their own messages and communicated in morse code.



# FLAME TESTING

Finally on Friday a group of pupils were treated to flame testing. The flame test is an analytical chemistry method used to help identify metal ions and it is a simple and fun way of seeing very colorful bunsen burner flames. By using a flame test, several chemicals which look physically similar can be identified from one another.

The pupils in the class were able to identify the different metals by the color that was produced. They used sample splints which had been presoaked in solutions of metal salts which then produce colorful flames when exposed to a bunsen burner.

All in all, the Science week activities were a huge success even with the limited school week due to the strikes. Thanks goes to all the pupils involved and also the staff including the technicians making this week a truly exciting week!



# SLIME

Tuesday after school a group of 30 pupils gathered to make some slime and that seemed to generate a great deal of excitement! A solution of polyvinyl alcohol (PVA) was made into a slime by adding borax solution, which



creates cross-links between polymer chains. The pupils gave their slime different shades by making use of food coloring and then looked at some interesting



properties of the slime. Wearing disposable gloves, they removed the slime from the cup and kneaded it thoroughly to mix the contents completely and then compared their effort with others!

A lot of pupils displayed excellent knowledge about slime and how to change its properties - it seems that slime has become a very popular material to make these days and there are lots of resources online to make it safely at home!



The pupils, mainly KS3 who did make the slime, had a varying degree of success. Some found out the hard way it is tricky to make it unless you use the exact quantity of the borax and the PVA. Others had some amazing samples and mixed colors. The activity



generated a good amount of mess with the glassware and equipment and we are blessed in the Science department to have amazing technicians who are able to deal with situations like this on a daily basis!





22 year 11 pupils have now been awarded their Bronze certificates and badges. Huge congratulations to them for showing the commitment and determination to complete their Physical, Skills and Volunteering sections outside of school. They are: Petra Akai, Bartosz Bielecki, Natalia Bujak, Daria Danilewska, Rihanna Mae Del Rosario, Ruth Dias, Sian Elliott, Jia Enokkaran, Sheniz Kariyawasam, Eugenie Linhinya, Lionel Manalo, Naomi Mark, Zara Miranda, Emma Nagle, Ria Pandey, Mary Peddakotla, Grace Phelan, Kieron Rose, Amelia Sepiolo, Ben Sparkes, Daniel Taguba and Natalia Turek

6 year 13 pupils have now been awarded their Silver certificates and badges, after completing their sections for a longer amount of time. Their commitment and efforts have been really impressive. Really well done to Zahra Merchant, Sinead Law, Patrisha Colaco, Maria Gonsalves, Aleena Habbie and Olsha Rodrigues.

We would still encourage other pupils who participated in the D of E programme last year to complete their awards - it's not too late! I'm happy to assist any who are not sure how to proceed to completion.

Ms Stewart



Exciting, Exhilarating and Energizing are only a few words that attempt to encapsulate the refreshing experience brought on by Richmond Walk. It was truly such an awe inspiringly great adventure, that opened our eyes to a completely foreign yet hands-on experience, teamwork was at the heart of the whole journey, as everyone played a role in navigation as we tracked through the terrain. Though when we did get lost, we made sound judgements to recover from the slight mishap. Indeed going on such a unique trip with your cherished best friends was not disappointing in the slightest, the wonderful memories that were made that day will never be forgotten! Ultimately, the Richmond Park Walk was a tremendous physical and emotional challenge to conquer but with the help of your best buddies, a map and a handful of determination anything is possible.

The Richmond park walk was an excellent experience. It allowed us to practice many essential skills for our DofE. We got to work together as a team, and practice activities such as navigation with a map and compass. As we had to plan what to carry, what food to take and who was doing what, this was a great team building experience.

We had an extraordinary time on this walk, and it will benefit us in our future. It is a unique experience only to be rivalled by the actual DofE expedition.

The Richmond Park walk was a challenging exciting and exhilarating experience that helped us get prepared for our DofE expedition. It heavily improved our teamwork, communication and navigation skills while still having fun and enjoying the amazing scenery. When we got a little lost at certain points we worked together well to get back on track and finish the walk.

Overall it was a great day, we had an amazing time while still learning many key life skills we will need for the future



The walkthrough of Richmond Park was fantastic. It allowed us to practice various crucial skills for our DofE. We had the opportunity to work as a group and practice skills such as compass use and map navigation. This was an amazing team-building event in which we explored and pushed ourselves to continue while laughing along the way.

We had a terrific time on our walk, and it will be useful to us in the future. It is a one-of-a-kind trip rivalled only by the genuine DofE expedition.



**Richmond Park**





# Year 7 Green Careers Cluster Project with Hydrasyst



St Mark's has been involved in the Hounslow Careers Cluster Project and a new initiative that we were invited to take part in, as part of this, was a 'Green' project. A team from Hydrasyst came into school on the 27th and 28th March to run workshops for our Year 7 students.

Hydrasyst was founded in 2007 to revolutionise water and energy recovery technology and technique for the industrial laundry service industry. Worldwide there is increasing pressure from commercial laundries to address rising water and energy prices as well as comply with sewer discharge requirements. To resolve this, Hydrasyst has developed a superior and sustainable hollow fibre ceramic membrane filtration technology with the highest membrane filtration efficiency and water and energy recovery capabilities in the global industry.

Year 7 students were given the opportunity to take part in activities that mainly involved testing water quality and filtering. They also got to see how Hydrasyst use VR equipment to share their information and digital microscopes to look at 'contaminated water' and, using simple utensils, removed microplastics. A member of the team also set the students some sales and business decisions.



This was a great project and we hope we will be able to invite Hydrasyst back into school again soon.





# AIMING FOR OXBRIDGE

## Year 8 - Problem-Solving

This term, the theme for the Aiming for Oxbridge sessions have been problem solving. Problem solving is an essential life skill as we are often surrounded by different circumstances everyday, some of which require varied responses. Analytical and critical thinking skills can assist you in your university applications and they are also valuable traits among employers.

In the first few sessions this term, we worked with friends to try and untangle a series of riddles and puzzles. Then, we were taught practical ways to approach a problem effectively. For example, it is easier to set about solving problems by visualising it on paper. Brainstorming produces a large amount of ideas quickly, and then organising them on paper may help to identify and correct flaws within your methods. Our skills were then put to the test when we were locked into an escape room, where we had to discover clues, work out puzzles and accomplish tasks.

Creativity is also appreciated in problem solving. In one lesson, we were asked to make a free standing bridge that supported weight up to 500 grams with only materials we were given. Some groups built beam bridges with paper straws, while others tried to construct suspension bridges connected with string.

And remember, most problems will not be solved on the first attempt. We have learned to stay resilient throughout the problem-solving process as mistakes could steer us to a more successful strategy. Techniques, resilience and practice will help you to get there sooner or later.

The Aiming for Oxbridge sessions have been absolutely wonderful and I would 100% recommend it to anyone that has the opportunity to in the future.

## Year 9

This term, the Year 9 Aiming for Oxbridge group have been taking part in an exciting project where they have had to apply their new skills and knowledge in a practical way. Mirroring the BBC's The Apprentice, students are competing in a series of business-related activities designed to test and challenge them across several subject areas.

### Round 1: Old School Research and Problem Solving

Round 1 of the Apprentice, which was the problem solving task. Each group was given a booklet filled with different problems we had to solve. This ranged from music, science, maths, geography, Greek mythology, general knowledge and other questions that involved our problem solving skills. Along with this task, there was a twist. Students were not allowed to use the internet at all to solve these problems. In individual groups, they had to work together, use their own knowledge, old school research in the LRC and talk to knowledgeable people such as teachers or family members.

Groups were also given the money they could use to trade for answers with other groups. As this was a competition, there was a leaderboard created which was ranked based on the number of points each group had earned. The points were decided by the number of correct answers we had in the booklet and the amount of money we had returned in the final hand in. However, the leaderboard can change between every task so each group has the chance to be at the top. Overall, this task was all about problem solving skills, communication, teamwork, negotiation and creative thinking as a group.

### Round 2: Medical Practice



The second task was a research project surrounding the topic of medicine. The groups had three weeks to prepare for a real-life medical clinic - diagnosing and suggesting treatment. Teams were given a booklet filled with information on 25 conditions ranging from deficiencies such as anaemia, to hereditary diseases like Huntington's disease, to viruses including Ebola and Covid-19.



This challenge was not all about knowledge though; teams had to deal with some pretty difficult personalities to test their bed-side manner too. The Year 12 students who are looking to apply for medicine at University came up with different 'personas' and conditions to test the Year 9s, who donned their laboratory coats to really play the part!

The knowledge and communication skills the Year 9s were able to demonstrate was remarkable and it was an

incredible experience for both Year 9s and 12s!

Team Mercury came out on top, due to their cool, calm & collected manner and communication skills, as well as their enviable subject knowledge - but the updated league tables are as follows:

1. Mercury: Rein, Roisin, Niamh, Darius
2. Velocity : Rhia, Lukan, Michelle, Matilda
3. Epicentre: Katherine, Loran, Joella, Fabian
3. Purple Dragons: Victor, Paulina, Connie, Kacper
5. Dauntless: Nigel, Katie, Hanna, Schawnelle
5. Malice: Ewelina, Jessica, Rhys, Samuel
7. Crusaders: Jaiden, Donelly, Wiktor, Aishwarya
7. Iced Out: Modube, Luke, Ellaine, Mark
9. Rockin': Porshia, Nathan, Fiomica, Roxanna



Now the students move on to Round 3: Book Publishing - all organised by the expertise of Ms Weir.

Teams are to become book publishers and create a hardcopy & audiobook version of a new children's book for the market. In two weeks' time, in classic The Apprentice style, the teams must face a fierce panel of judges and pitch their idea, displaying how many signatures they have gathered from teachers to demonstrate that their book is worth investing in!



## Rotary Speaking

The incredible success of the seniors was echoed and (perhaps bettered) in the Junior Category. Hanna Paluch, Katherine Dibley and Rhys Mallari recorded unprecedented success in the Rotary competition this year getting all the way to National level. After winning the Hounslow Borough competition in November, they followed this up with a resounding win at the Regional Finals.... finally becoming District Champions earlier in March. In doing so, they beat out some of the most prestigious public speaking schools in the South of England.

With this win, they took St Mark's to uncharted territory...

the National Semi-Final of the Rotary Competition. The competition was fierce and we were certainly witnessing some of the future leaders of society with incredible displays of oratory skill and charisma. While not making it to the National final, they underwent a spectacular journey which is a testament to their drive, ambition and real talent.

Well done to all competitors and we look forward to seeing how they fare in the Senior competition next year!

*In mid October, Mr Sheehan approached Andreas, Joyce, and I to ask us to perform in the Senior category of the Rotary Club Public Speaking competition, where we would have to perform speeches in front of a panel of judges and against teams our age and older from across the Borough. We had but two weeks to craft and learning a speech on a chosen topic ("Do the Ends Justify the Means") with one person being the Chairperson (Joyce), one the Propostion (me), and one the Oppostion (Andreas). We had to do vigorous research into the motion, and be able to deliver them with style. Despite our nerves, we managed to win and we were onto the next stage of the competition, the Regional Finals. Our confidence was certainly growing and the improvement from that excellent first performance was obvious to everyone. The second round was one where we were unsure if we would come out victorious, but alas, we did. The District Finals were up next. Due to be two weeks later, Joyce, Andreas, and knew that we were going to be up against some of the most talented young speakers in the south of England. At long last, the day came. We sat through the Intermediate category (and were glad to see our school's team win) and then the whole of the Seniors until we got up and did what we knew best. Unfortunately, the competition was fierce, and we narrowly missed out on a spot in the National Semi-Finals, however I was lucky enough to win Best Propostion in the Senior category. I know the three of us will be forever grateful for this exciting, challenging opportunity, and the skills we have developed through this will not go to waste.*



We have started a new Youth SVP group at St Mark's this term. The group meets on a Thursday lunchtime in the Chapel. We are delighted that some of the students have taken on leadership roles with in the group:

President  
Vice Presidents  
Treasurer  
Secretary  
Communications

Noel Nelson  
Andreas Pereira, Rihanna Jose  
Rahul Karthikeyan  
Sian Carvalho  
Prylon Estrocio



On Saturday 25th March, Andrea, Rahul, Sian and Prylon travelled to St Aolysius Church, Euston, with Ivan (our Chaplain) and Mrs Ferguson to attend the SVP Westminster Diocese Festival. We learnt more about the amazing work the SVP is doing to respond to the needs of vulnerable people. With a formula of 'See, Think, Do' our group of students are ready to take an active part in social action.

We are delighted that two of our Year 12 students took part in the CONNECT Girls' Mentoring programme this year, organised by Spark!. Each student had a Mentor from GSK and the mentoring sessions focused on Leadership Styles, Goal-setting, Personal Strengths, Time Management, CV Building and Career Planning. It was a great please to see them 'graduate' in a ceremony at GSK in Brentford on Wednesday, 22nd March. Giselle and Shanai would both recommend this programme to future female students who are eligible.







On the 9th of February, the Year 12 and Year 11 drama students had the privilege of seeing Frantic Assembly's 'Othello', at the Lyric theatre in Hammersmith. We travelled from school on the tube and after a quick meal, we were able to take our seats in the magnificent theatre. There

was an air of excitement and anticipation as none of us knew what to expect and as the lights went down, we were on the edge of our seats! The first act commenced and we were enthralled by the beautiful movement used by the actors and the way they put complete trust in each other to complete

difficult tricks. One student said "The movement seemed so professional and fluid and overall the piece was so intriguing". One moment that stood out to me was the love scene between Othello and Desdemona as it was so beautifully choreographed and the love they bore for one another was so apparent without a single word having been said. Although sometimes it was a little difficult to understand what was being said, as it was performed in Shakespearean English, the tremendous acting made up for it, especially by Micheal Akinsulire who played Othello, as the emotions he portrayed were so raw. The second act began and the tension rose as the betrayal and secrecy played out



on the stage. For me, the final scene was very poignant as Othello murders Desdemona and then takes his own life out of guilt. The two actors were phenomenal in the way they showcased this. In response to the play, two students said "the Shakespearean dialogue was a struggle to understand at first but the stylised movement certainly helped deliver the message of the play" and "it was a stunning display of movement



and an excellent modernised take on a Shakespearean classic". Overall, it was an amazing school trip and I for one would definitely recommend seeing it to someone looking to see something classic yet something a little different at the same time.

Written by Libby Duncan in Year 12.



Can you match the words of the week from the first half of this term to their definitions?

Dysgu	French
Gemütlich	Irish
Draíocht	German
Pronto	Tagalog
Mahal	Italian
Déjà vu	Welsh

Each week the pupils get an opportunity to learn a new word and the etymology of that word.

Cinch	- Secret or dishonest activity. - Silly or high-spirited behaviour
Paraphernalia	- The equipment used for or connected to a particular activity
Shenanigans	- a situation of confused movement or violent turmoil.
Maelstrom	- Secure with a belt - An extremely easy task

In the second half of the term, the words of the week all came from the 56 different languages spoken by staff and students. Can you match the words of the week to the language from which they come?

Each week year 7, 8, 9 and 10 complete lessons on Bedrock Learning. These lessons are designed to improve their reading skills which positively impacts all areas of their learning. Every single student has made progress using Bedrock but here are the top students for progress and points in each year group. Well done!



YEAR 7

PROGRESS



Simeon Andorful

POINTS



Claennis Rao

YEAR 8

PROGRESS



Wayne Rodrigues

POINTS



Shemira Fernando

YEAR 9

PROGRESS



Loran Nawzad

POINTS



Lysander Fernandes

YEAR 10

PROGRESS



Ricardo Ghousoub

POINTS



Nerissa Barreto





This year we celebrated World Book Day on Wednesday 1st March and to commemorate our love of reading various fun and exciting activities were planned throughout the week. Students were firstly encouraged to take part in a quiz where they learnt about teachers' favourite books; this triggered many conversations about reading. We photographed some teachers who 'Got Caught Reading' and displayed these in reception throughout the week. In assemblies Mrs McGinty set all students the challenge to read Four Books in Four Months. Those who were interested in taking up the challenge have signed up through the LRC and their success will be celebrated in the summer. On Wednesday 1st March we honoured World



Book Day by sharing a story. At the start of every period, we listened to recordings of a short story by Helen Dunmore called 'My Polish Teacher's Tie'. As the tale progressed the students were extremely keen to find out how Carla's story unfolded. During break time we held a Book Fair. This was able to happen because of the generous book donations made by staff and students. Pupils were able to visit the book stand and collect a book for free – if they promised they would read it!



Finally, the day was a blaze of colour and vibrancy thanks to multiple staff who dressed in costumes of famous characters from literature – it was an amazing and fun-filled sight! We look forward to celebrating next year and continuing to promote reading for pleasure at all opportunities.





*The Reading chair project, what is it all about?*

*Our aim is to increase the amount of children that read in the UK. Sixth Form students visited their clients in Year 5 at St Michael and St Martin primary school to gather specific information for their chair project. The research consisted of meeting client needs, and ensuring that our chairs will motivate them to read more. We shared ideas with them through sketches, and CAD (Computer-Aided-Design) and lastly on our most recent trip we took over our Card Models which we did also leave behind!. All of us in Year 12 expect to gain the ideals and skills which will help us produce the finest Coursework and Products in Year 13. Through this project, all year 12 students have been able to collaborate with one another making sure everyone is on the same wavelength and ensuring that we get tasks done efficiently as a team. We believe that through the Chair project we are highlighting the importance of reading and how it should be prioritised as a main focus in lower stages of education as it builds a foundation for a child to have a brighter education ahead. Through reading this we hope it encourages your children to read and possibly encourages other schools to promote a Reading Chair Project.*

### **Emsley De Souza**

My journey into the Product Design Life began in Year 10 and I can say that I am very passionate about the subject due to it enhancing my problem solving skills and teamwork. Now in Year 12 through the Reading Chair Project we are practising our NEA (Coursework) for our Year 13 project. Working with the St Michael and St Martin Primary has been exciting as the young clients are showing enthusiasm and passion towards increasing Reading in lower years of education.



### **Alisson Piano**

Starting A-level product design has been such a pleasant and interesting journey, that I recommend many students should try! The chair project has really pushed me out of my comfort zone and allowed me to experience how to sell products to a client.

### **Milan Trehan**

The chair project in product design is something very unique but also extremely beneficial. I find the aspect of working with a client very exciting but also challenging as I must fulfil their requests. This challenges my designing skills but I feel I have gained valuable experience from this which I can carry through to my final project in year 13.



# **The Reading Chair Project**

### **Andrew Bermudez**

The last time I had a lesson in Product Design was in 2020. The chair project has provided me with enough certainty in what I want to do in the future. The combination of different digital (Computer Aided Design) and technological skills (Joints and uses for different tools) has made it a challenging but rewarding process. It has taught me how to work as a team and problem solve. Going back to my previous school for my research, St Michael and St Martins, and meeting the future generation was joyous as it had brought a warm feeling to my heart because they were filled with so much enthusiasm. These experiences and gained knowledge will help me with my final year 13 project.



### **Kevin Pangilinan**

Starting product design in A-level has been a very fun experience for me. This chair project has been interesting especially our visits to St Michael and St Martin primary school where we interacted with our year 5 clients.

### **Shanon Fernandes**

From not having any knowledge from the product design environment from GCSE, I have found the chair project fascinating but also tough. The visit to St Michael and St Martin was a great opportunity to gather information through the clients, extracting their ideas and constructing a chair model did teach critical thinking skills and much more that I will use in the future. Furthermore the use of industry tools such as Fusion 360 CAD has inspired me to keep learning the functional skills and developing my knowledge on it.



### **Arminas Petronis**

I started to enjoy product design from the first lesson I walked into. I found it something that I was not only passionate about but also very good at. It is definitely a class that has taught a good amount of skills over the years. From technological and digital skills, to physical skills. I have learnt how to use CAD, how to make all sorts of different products, how to engage my mind correctly when trying to come up with an idea. For our current project we had to go to St Michael and St Martins school to speak to the students. This brought joy as seeing young students so eager to learn and engage with these activities shows me the type of future we have coming.





Our Under 16 basketball team continued their run to the finals day of the London Youth Games representing Hounslow after a quarter final win over Teddington school representing Richmond.

It's the first time in 10 years that we have reached this stage of the competition and all of the squad should be congratulated on their efforts.

The squad includes:

Anton Safin  
Tomas Safin  
Jared Balangao  
Louis Osayomwanbor  
Freddie Murphy-Welch  
Euan Tarac  
Ian Bilin  
Leo Kanagarasa  
Seydan Rodrigues  
Michael Gregorio  
Harry Perez  
Philip Manangan



The Under 16 Basketball team finished 3rd in the London Youth Games basketball tournament after a dramatic finals day at the Score centre in Leyton.

The boys lost their semi final with a dramatic last shot 'buzzer beater' defeat but managed to regain their composure in order to beat the American School of London representing Westminster.

This is the furthest we have ever managed to progress in the competition and the boys deserve a huge amount of credit for the efforts.



All the basketball squads have had successful seasons with the Year 7,9 and 10 teams winning the pools and the Year 8 team finishing runners up - congratulations to all the students who have taken part.

*Borough Runners Up*

# SPORT

ON Tuesday 21st March, St Mark's were invited to play in the Year 7 annual borough tournament at Springwest Academy. As recently crowned Borough league Champions we were the team to beat! To make things even more daunting for the other schools in the competition, we entered 2 teams as we have such strength in depth in the squad. We were identified as St Mark's A and St Mark's B.

Both teams made it through each of their games without conceding a goal so special commendations must go to our goalkeepers, Neeve and Lynelle, also captain of each team, who were outstanding!

The level of football played throughout the afternoon was impressive and the spirit within each team was unmatched by any other school (as we would expect from our fantastic students!)

With no losses for either team and a goalless draw against each other, it would come down to which St Mark's team had won more games or perhaps had scored more goals.....



The newly crowned Borough Rally Champions were ST MARK'S B team!!

Closely followed by runners up ST MARK'S A team! A huge congratulations to both teams who were a credit to St Mark's throughout the afternoon. Well done girls!! Double congratulations too as I mentioned before, the girls are also League Champions with no one actually managing to beat St Mark's this year in any football competition!!

Watch this space as with such a strong squad, I'm sure we can continue to be the team to beat for years to come!



On Thursday 23rd February, St. Mark's hosted the annual Year 8 Netball Borough Tournament.

12 schools from across the Borough entered the tournament. The tournament was organised into 2 pools of 6 teams with the winner and runner up from each pool going

through to the semi final stage. Games in the group stage were 10 minutes in duration.

Lots of fantastic netball was played during the afternoon and the St Mark's team battled well and showed excellent team work.

Gumley, Brentford, Heathland A team and Lampton A team made it through to the semi final stage. Gumley and Lampton A team then met in the final with Lampton coming out on top in a closely matched game, eventually winning 4-2. Well done to all teams that took part and congratulations to Lampton A team who were crowned Borough champions!





