

VERITAS

St Mark's Catholic School

No. 31 - SUMMER 2023

CULTURAL DAY

2023



UK Chemistry Olympiad

Q: What do Swiss cheese, vitamin E acetate and rocket fuel all have in common?

A: They were all the subject of questions in this year's UK Chemistry Olympiad

Earlier this year our Year 13 chemists took part in the Royal Society of Chemistry's prestigious UK Chemistry Olympiad - achieving an amazing nine bronze and three silver awards between them!

Designed to challenge and inspire, the UK Chemistry Olympiad takes place every January at schools and colleges around the country. The first round is a two-hour long exam paper, comprising five questions, which stretches students beyond the A-level curriculum and asks them to apply their knowledge and chemical skills to unfamiliar contexts. The questions are pulled from a diverse range of areas and all relate to new, real-world and often surprising contexts.

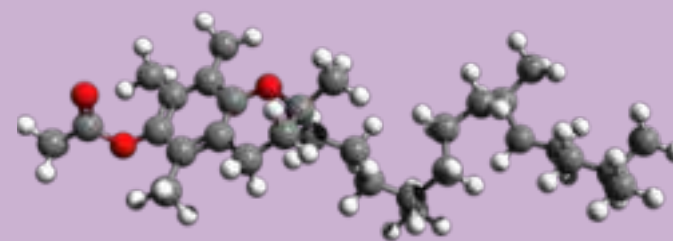
Questions this year covered such broad topics as:

- Rocket fuel used in the NASA Artemis rocket
- Linus Pauling's Nobel prize winning work on electro-negativity
- Amino acids and dietary supplements
- Vaping and the potential dangers of vitamin E acetate, and
- Cheese manufacturing and the production of holes in Swiss cheese.

Whilst the difficulty and unfamiliarity of the questions can prove challenging, the UK Chemistry Olympiad is also a unique opportunity for our students to push themselves further and explore new areas of chemistry. It also helps to demonstrate to students how they can take the principles of chemistry and apply them to unfamiliar problems and is fantastic preparation for their A-level examinations.

All of the students taking part did amazingly well at tackling such a difficult challenge, and we're pleased to say that nine students achieved a bronze award and three a silver award. Congratulations to them all!

Mr Mihailovic - Chemistry Department



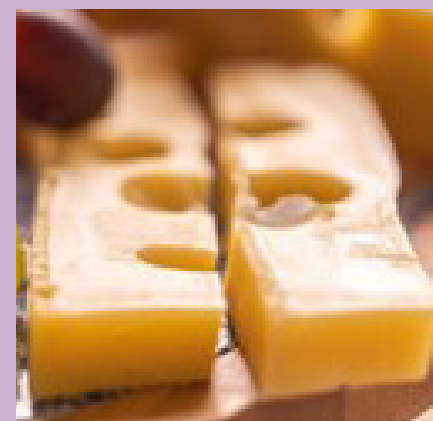
Bronze awards:

Samika Chandra Shekar
Harshita Chavali
Michael Da Silva
Jessica Ferzli
Alida Lopes
Bihandu Pigera
Amhara Pineda
Karron Pinto
Harriet Tomson



Silver awards:

Ayoka D'Costa
Tinkle Macwan
Zahra Merchant



The end of the Academic Year is a time to reflect on everything that we have achieved as a community, from our Outstanding Ofsted inspection in September, to success in sports, public speaking and music competitions. We have so much to be proud of and we acknowledge the dedication of staff and the hard work of students throughout the year.



The photograph on the front cover of this edition was taken during our Cultural Day last week. This was a special day to celebrate the rich diversity of St. Mark's. Many students wore Cultural Dress and displayed their talents through poetry, music and dance.

I hope that you and your families have a restful Summer break and we look forward to welcoming our students back to school in September.

Ms A Waugh-Lucas
Headteacher





The Metropolitan Police have been running an event for Year 7 students in schools across Ealing, Hillingdon and Hounslow, called 'Your life, You choose'. The main aim is to provide young people with key information so that they can go on to make good choices. On Thursday, 22nd June, some of the agencies currently involved in the project: the Police Safer Schools Team, the



Youth Engagement Team, the Daniel Spargo Mabbs Foundation and the London Ambulance Service came to school to meet and work with our Year 7 students.

Lynelle in Year 7 said, 'I would recommend this to other schools as it is a very educational experience. People from outside of school came in to talk about how to avoid trouble and to make the right choices. What stood out to me the most is the amount of murders in London per day; it was shocking. My favourite session was with the Daniel Spargo Mabbs Foundation.

I personally would change the title of the day to 'Make the right choices'.

Renee in Year 7 said, 'The day was very educational and interesting as we were learning about how to stay safe everywhere and anywhere. In the first hour we went to meet a person who sends out ambulances to help others who are hurt, she explained to us what happened to her son and how she decided to work as someone who helps others because of this!



In the second period we met with a person from the DSM Foundation. She taught us about drug safety and different types of drugs illegal and not illegal which helped me understand about different substances.

Later on we went to see policemen who educated us about how we should stay safe and help others. He talked about the danger of knives and the wide range of uses. We had another presentation about being groomed into gangs and how we should not allow ourselves to be lured into accepting gifts in exchange for offering to do tasks for people who approach us. Instead we should tell a trusted adult and let them help.

Finally we reflected on our first year at St Mark's with Mr Fisher and remembered about the start of school and how much we've grown mentally and physically over the year!



The 'Your Life, You choose' team will be back next year to present to our new Year 7 students.



At St. Mark's we are very lucky to have a wonderful team of Wellbeing Ambassadors. Our Wellbeing Ambassadors take a lead role in driving the school's mental health and wellbeing agenda through pupil voice. We were privileged to hear them taking the lead in delivering this year's Mental Health Awareness Week and being fantastic role models to their peers.



Year 12 finished Mental Health Awareness Week with a visit from the Samaritans who shared

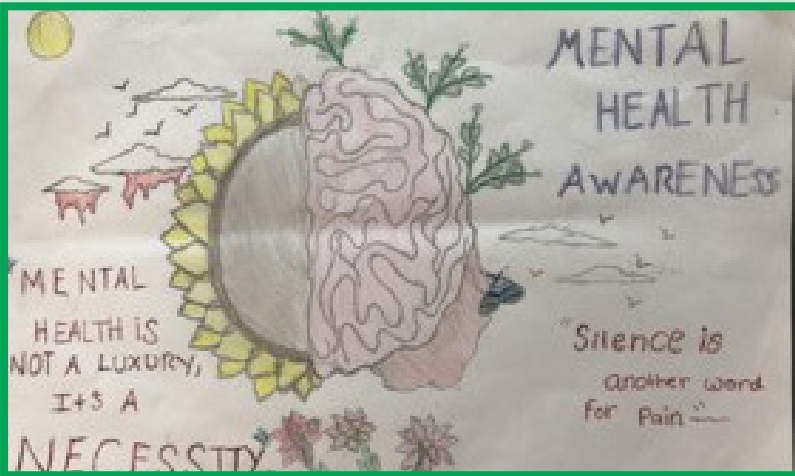
with Year 12 ways we can all become better listeners. It provided much food for thought on how we can all be active rather than passive listeners and how important it is to share what may be worrying us.



Mental Health Awareness Week Creative Arts competition Winners



During Mental Health Awareness Week, students were encouraged to try out a 'wellbeing club' where teachers had kindly offered to share with students one way they look after themselves. These included yoga, origami, board games, gardening, knitting, badminton, meditation and a range of other exciting activities. Everyone had a great time trying something new as you can see!



Wellbeing focus week challenges				
WELLNESS Gratitude diary - A diary to be filled in every day	THOUGHTS Check in - Ask yourself how you are and take the time to really listen	BE ACTIVE Get active - 30 minutes of exercise per day	GIVE Screen break - Switch your phone off for 24 hours (or at least for 1 hour)	KEEP CALM Sleeping hygiene - 10 minutes of deep breathing before bed
Worry diary - Write down your worries	Feed the monster - Draw a monster and feed it with your worries	Quality sleep - 10 minutes of deep breathing before bed	Hold a door open - Be a human door for 24 hours	Breathing grounds - Draw a landscape and write down your thoughts
Spend time in nature - Get your phone and go for a walk	Play - Spend 10 minutes playing a game or sport every day	Get out on a walk - Go for a walk every day	Do a household chore - Do a household chore every day	Try something new - Try something new every day

On the week commencing the 15th of May, Years 7-9 were given, instead of homework, wellbeing challenges to support Mental Health Awareness Week's theme of Anxiety. Students were to complete challenges that would help them control feelings of anxiety and to help their wellbeing. Some of the tasks that they were set were 'getting active', having a 'screen break', and 'breathing exercises' to help them focus on their mental health and wellbeing, and help them learn some healthy coping mechanisms to help

manage anxious thoughts. We enjoyed working our way through the tasks given to find out which would be best for us to help us cope with worry, fear or anxiety. Overall, it made us acknowledge that there are many different coping mechanisms to help us with our mental health.

By Wellbeing Ambassador Phoebe Lawrence



Year 8 students
Shemira Fernando
Nieola Julian
Phoebe Lawrence

'Mental Preparation for Exams workshops'

This year we have launched a series of workshops for Years 10-13 to help them prepare mentally for exams. These workshops use cognitive behavioural therapy practices to help students approach stress and anxiety around exams in more positive ways. We have had fantastic feedback from students as you can see below:

The anxiety workshop was great! It really helped me organise my thoughts better and understand that I am not my thoughts, only the observer. What I do with the thoughts is what matters.



I learnt about NAT's, negative automatic thoughts, and how to combat them when I am stressed. This can be done by encouraging myself with positive statements such as "I can do this" and "It's not the end of the world". These little statements made a huge impact on my performance in the recent exams and my over all well-being. I felt less stressed and therefore had time to focus on the actual exam itself, doing my best.

The breathing activities and exercises had an immediate effect on me, I felt calmer and less nervous, more relaxed.

Overall the anxiety and stress workshop was great, though it was only one session it will stay with me for a lifetime.

By Wellbeing Ambassador Kathleen Celadena Year 12



All of Year 12 also experienced a condensed version of this workshop, which started with them identifying what most causes them stress during exams.

Mental Health Awareness Week
15th -21st May 2023



Here are our wonderful Year 9 Peer Mentors delivering an assembly to Year 7.

The Peer Mentors wrote their own assembly giving the Year 7s advice for when they are older and they may start to use social media. They were thoughtful in how they approached this task and presented brilliantly.



On Saturday 27th May a group of GCSE and A-Level music students accompanied by Ms Welbourn and Mr Rogan went to the prestigious Royal Albert Hall to watch Black Panther with the score being played live by Chineke! Orchestra.

Black Panther is set in the nation of Wakanda, where King T'Challa has just become king and taken the title of Black Panther. When a powerful enemy suddenly reappears, T'Challa gets tested when he's drawn into a conflict that puts the fate of Wakanda and the entire world at risk.

After Ms Welbourn bought us some ice lollies we entered the Royal Albert Hall. Immediately, we were shocked by the beauty and size of the Hall. We got seats in the rousing circle and although we got a restricted view, it was still an amazing experience. One of the original performers for Black Panther joined Chineke!, who was playing the Talking Drum. This is a traditional West African instrument and plays the famous drum part in the original soundtrack. Overall it was a fantastic experience and we can't wait to go to the Albert Hall again!

By Ryan Rodrigues (9Ca) and Darius Dias (9Fi)





In Year 8 Textiles we were asked to design a T-shirt using tie and dye with applique and embroidery embellishments. The design question was "How might designing a T-shirt logo promote a conversation around ethical / environmental or social issues?"



We were given 2 Tunnocks tea cakes, raspberries, blueberries, strawberries and digestive biscuits. We were allowed to bring 2 or 3 things of our own choice too. The challenge was to demonstrate creativity in our garnishing and presentation skills.

TUNNOCKS TEACAKE CHALLENGE



Fourth Monkey

Actor Training Company

Exploring the Power of Movement: Fourth Monkey Drama School Inspires GCSE and A-Level Drama Students

On Friday 24th March 2023, representatives from 'Fourth Monkey Drama School', renowned for their innovative and boundary-pushing approach to theatre, delivered a movement workshop to a group of Drama GCSE and A-Level students. The workshop aimed to broaden the students' artistic horizons, ignite their creativity, and enhance their understanding of the transformative power of physicality in performance.



Led by highly skilled facilitators, the workshop emphasised the significance of body language, spatial

awareness, and non-verbal communication in theatrical performances. Through a series of dynamic exercises, the students were encouraged to explore their own bodies and embrace the freedom of movement as a means of storytelling.



The workshop fostered a sense of unity and cooperation among the students and encouraged them to step out of their comfort zones and embrace their individual creativity, using a range of exercises, including exploring the use of bamboo sticks during intense physical partner work. The students were encouraged to let go of their inhibitions and embrace spontaneity, in a supportive environment.

It was wonderful to watch the students working with their peers from different year groups and the facilitators commented on their high levels of energy and skill, claiming they were the most focused group of students that they had ever worked with. As a result of the workshop, the students were empowered to use their bodies confidently and unleash the transformative power of movement in their most recent GCSE and A level assessment performances.

Ms Hutchison



On the 8th of June 2023, the Year 12 business class led by Ms Wade and Mr Rogan visited the Brompton bikes factory in Greenford. We began with an introduction into the history of Brompton and how the Brompton Bicycle manufacturing company developed to become the market-leader of folding bicycles in the UK. During our tour of the factory our tour guide, Alex, talked us through the assembling process of the Brompton bike. It was fascinating how little abnormal objects could be turned into a beautifully made folding bike. Stages included making the wheels, brakes, drivetrains, gears, frames and assembling of the product itself, which was finally completed with a final touch of paint and gloss. An average Titanium bike costs £4180 and after learning about how the bikes are made, I'd have to say they're worth it. The workers need to be applauded because of their specialist skill and care into making such a bike and ensuring they are of the most premium quality. We noticed how bespoke these bikes are and their level of detail and engineering allows them to stand out in the market. It is no wonder why celebrities like Prince Harry, Hugh Bonneville, Gemma Arterton and James May all have Bromptons!

A Level Business student Glavin says "It was really interesting, it is so helpful to make links between real life business and and topics we learn such as motivation, production, quality and supplier-relations"

The Year 12 Business class and Ms Wade would also like to thank Ms Khortiyeva for giving us a contact at Brompton bikes.

By Eleneuio, year 12



Year 12 - Film in a Day workshop

The St Mark's "Film in a Day" workshop took place on Tuesday 27th June, where we were fortunate enough to have two lecturers from the University of West London come in and educate a number of film, media and drama students in the art of filmmaking and storytelling through a narrative. Our main task of the day was to



create a short film centred around the prompt "Goodbye.". At the start of the day, we first got to know each other through various exercises and we later were taught the basics in storytelling, constructing a plotline and employing the use of different camera angles to

help deliver our narrative, until we were tasked with creating our short film. To do this, we were split into groups of 3-4 people and began by brainstorming and storyboarding our initial ideas, before we were sent out to film freely around the school. After gathering our footage, we reconvened back in the theatre to edit and finalise our short films. We then enjoyed a celebrated premiere of everyone's final products! Through the experience, we learned and refined many skills like filming, acting, editing and screenplay, as well as working as a group.

Arianne Hunt and Kameron O'Conner



On the 29th June 2023, we were all lucky enough to be in the presence of past students that are now working and studying in their chosen career pathways. They came in to speak and guide us through their own journey and experiences throughout their education, as well as providing some top tips for our students.

Firstly, we had Georgiana Solomes. She has a Bachelor's in Medicinal and Biological Chemistry as well as a Masters in Psychology from the University of Nottingham. Having worked as a Nursery teacher, Teaching and Research Assistant, Georgiana provided insight into the university process and postgraduate life, but also an insight into careers in education, research and Psychology.



Shortly after, we had the opportunity to listen to Jack Norris and his journey. After leaving St Marks in 2014, Jack followed his passion and went on to train at the National Youth Theatre and eventually went on to study Drama at St Mary's where he achieved a 1st class degree in Physical Theatre. Alongside Jack's other

notable projects, he is currently working on a musical called "Fall Risk", an upcoming Broadway Musical about Cystic Fibrosis, a condition he contends with personally. Running parallel to Jack's performance career, he has also Co-Founded a charity with award winning actor, Ben Keaton called "Creativity Academy", a charity focused on the enrichment of creative education within primary schools, focusing primarily on economically deprived parts of the country. He believes creativity is not merely an option but a necessity!

Ona Okechi studied Science at A-Levels in St Mark's then went on to pursue a Bachelor's degree in

Pharmaceutical sciences which she has just completed. She informed the audience that even though everything didn't seem to fall into place early on, she was still able to come out and pursue something she enjoys immensely.

Finally, Michelle Munyoro studied Biomedical sciences at St George's University and has now transferred to Medicine at the same university. She was here to inform us of her journey and any challenges she may have faced along the way. During the talk, Michelle went on to motivate the audience and encourage them to 'push

through and do not give up!'. This was one piece of advice she kept with her throughout her life journey.

These talks helped ease students into the university process including UCAS applications by making them aware that they are not alone and by making them feel more comfortable.

Overall, it was very enjoyable and a success!

Ava Nketsiah 12 Maple



LIFE AFTER ST MARK'S



The Duke of Edinburgh Bronze practice expedition took place on the weekend of the 6th and 7th of May. 42 brave students arrived at school, bright-eyed, and ready to jump on the minibuses to be driven to the starting point at Wendover Woods.

The supposedly 1 hour drive turned into an exciting road trip thanks to getting lost twice. Mr Greensmith’s heroic 17-point turns with the trailer attached to the back of the mini-bus, aided by Ms Weir’s directing, saved the day and we arrived at the start, just as the rain began to fall. Undaunted and spirits high, the groups went their separate ways to follow the routes that they had meticulously plotted and planned.

Mixed results ensued with 2 groups instantly getting lost after leaving the car park. Another group descended into chaos and arrived at the first checkpoint more than one hour after every other group. Despite these early setbacks, all groups made good progress through the afternoon. In the face of the relentless rain and heavy bags to



carry, everyone bravely soldiered on one step at a time. By early afternoon, the first groups began to arrive and make camp. This involved pitching their tents, laying out their sleeping arrangements, and preparing their cooking stations. The groups were required to carry all of the equipment they would need. This meant teamwork was of the upmost importance this weekend. “Group Chaos” had seemingly put their differences aside and made excellent progress in the afternoon to catch up and pass 3 other groups to arrive at the campsite.

For only the second time in the last 10 years, every group arrived at the campsite by 6pm. This came as a huge relief to all the kind staff who volunteered their weekends and didn’t



played, eliciting many laughs and much joy.



Next came bedtime and, for many, the novelty of sleeping in a tent. The warm embrace of a sleeping bag was very tempting after a long wet day of walking and despite the insistence of not being tired, all were soon fast asleep.

Tweet... tweet... whoo-oo, whoo-oo. The dawn chorus was singing and the light crept into the tents. “Alright everybody, it’s 6 o’clock; time to wake up” said Mr Janman. “Yes sir,” replied the students, “we’ve already been up for an hour.”

“We know, we could hear you talking” chimed in Mr Shore.

A lucky few had slept through the night and were energised ready to complete their expedition; others were less successful at sleeping. These poor, unfortunate souls were very bleary eyed until breakfast was made. The groups had to plan, carry and bring their own breakfast which resulted in a tasty affair with delicious choices of french toast, bacon, sausages, porridge, and rice pudding. Rice pudding? For breakfast? Who thought that was a good idea? Well Group 3 did. We will come back to that idea later.

Following breakfast, camp was broken, and the groups readied for Day 2 of their voyage. The skies had finally cleared and prospects were bright. Groups 6 and 7 were excited to get underway (or get it over with) and were packed efficiently and effectively,



10 minutes ahead of schedule. Meanwhile Group 8, who were the first to arrive on Saturday evening, kindly offered to leave last and sweep the campsite for any litter left behind.

With the better weather spurring them on, every group made excellent time on Sunday morning. The mobile command centre, operated by the staff, stood ready to leap into action but ended up redundant due to the success of all groups. Finishing more than one hour ahead of all the other groups was Group 3. Maybe that rice pudding for breakfast wasn’t such

a bad idea. Back on the minibuses, 40 winks were deservedly caught by many a tired adventurer.

A huge congratulations to all of the Year 10s who have now completed their Bronze practice expedition. Time now to make adjustments ready for the assessed expedition at Corfe Castle next month.





The silver-clad adventurers of the Duke of Edinburgh program recently completed a memorable and exhilarating assessed weekend. From Friday to Sunday, these determined students faced challenges head-on, showcasing their resilience, teamwork, and adaptability. Equipped with tents and Trangias, they camped overnight, cooked camp food, and embarked on exciting activities, proving their mettle in the face of nature's obstacles.

Amidst the breathtaking wilderness, the students demonstrated self-sufficiency by preparing meals using their trusty Trangias, fostering independence and survival skills. Engaging in "iSpy challenges," they honed their navigation and problem-solving abilities, while creative video projects will showcase their storytelling and videography skills!

Despite the heat posing a new challenge, these students pushed forward, managing their hydration and supporting one another. Each team showcased exceptional commitment, but the blue group stood out with their unparalleled walking abilities, setting a record-breaking pace that amazed the staff!

Completing the assessed weekend marks a significant milestone in the students' Duke of Edinburgh journey, with memories and lessons that will last a lifetime. Their resilience, teamwork, and remarkable achievements inspire others to embrace adventure and embark on their own extraordinary journeys of self-discovery.

Congratulations to all the silver Duke of Edinburgh students for their outstanding accomplishments during the assessed weekend.





Charity Walk

On a slightly less than sunny Wednesday in July, our full 6th form took to our annual St Mark's Charity walk route. The event has raised tens of thousands of pounds for charity over the years, and the fundraising efforts of this year will add to the total for our school charities. Students walked a 13km route, starting at school, heading through Hounslow Heath, winding along Crane Park and finally ending up in Busy Park for some refreshments at the cricket club. Our biggest thanks to the Bushy Park Cricket Club, who kindly let us use the cricket pavilion to celebrate the end of the walk. Students all walked in blue to represent the school, with added facepaint and jewellery to spice things up, and the mood of the whole day was a really joyous one! What a wonderful way to round out such a great year for our 6th form!





LONDON EYE AND RIVER CRUISE

YEAR 8 TRIP



On 28th June, a group of year 7 students were given a unique learning experience, a 360° adventure on the London eye, observing London's iconic landscape from the sky. Not only were the pupils able to discover the city's geographical and historical features, they also analysed London's changing architecture and its impact.

After enjoying great views from the sky, the students were taken on a circular sightseeing cruise. The 40 minute cruise featured educational live commentary presented by expert guides and included sights such as St Paul's Cathedral, Tower Bridge, Tower of London and Shakespeare's globe. Overall, it was an entertaining and memorable visit into the heart of the city.



YEAR 7 TRIP



On The 26th of June a group of students including myself were fortunate enough to take part in a school trip to London. On that day we were able to take part in many activities including going on the London eye and taking a river cruise along the River Thames. Throughout the day, as a group we were guided through London, on and off the trains, and visited many famous landmarks such as; The London Eye, Big Ben, The rebuilt Globe Theatre, Tower bridge, London bridge and many more. Overall, I think that our day out was successful and we all enjoyed it very much.





YEAR 13 PROM 2023





What did you enjoy most about the performance?

I really liked the way the characters changed their tone of voice when joking around or asking questions and the setting matched the scene they had been acting out.

What do you think the overall message of the production was?

The message of the production was that you should always stand up for what you believe in and always focus on the positives and improvements rather than worrying about negatives.

Who was your favourite character?

My favourite character was Elphaba because she always ignored peoples dislikes about her and she wanted to prove to them that just because you are different, doesn't mean you can't do the same things as others.

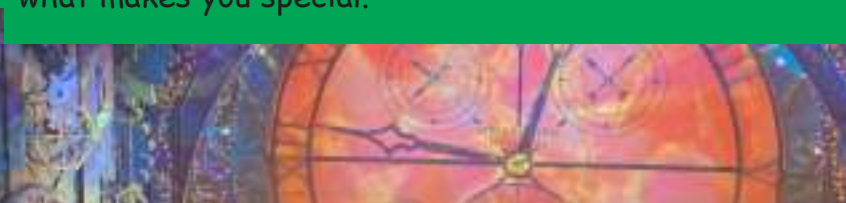
If you could play any role in a musical, what would it be and why?

I would like to play the role of Elphaba as she shows lots of resilience when people had not supported her just because she was different. However, she ignored other opinions and learned that it is perfectly fine to be different because that's what makes you special.

Summarise the production in five words or less!

Most unexpected ending of belief.

Review by
Maja Radon
7 Fisher



Who was your favourite character?

Glinder

I enjoyed the songs and the blue dress

Summarise the production in five words or less!

Lots of songs. Dancing. Acting

If you could play any role in a musical, what would it be and why?

I would play cinderella because I think that everyone deserve a chance to shine

Review by
Wania Mohammed
7 Fisher

What do you think the overall message of the production was?

The overall production was about that witches can be good



During Lent we were asked to be creative and use the embroidery skills we had learnt in our Textiles lessons to design and create a bookmark. This we did by using recycled fabrics e.g. old clothes / tea towels or scraps of fabric. The theme of Lent this year was "A time to come together" so we used that to inspire us. For us this meant things like peace; being kind and respectful; helpful; supportive; considerate and a time to show empathy.



Year 8 Textiles Bookmarks

At the end of April, 101 of our year 7 and year 8 mathematicians, along with just over a quarter of a million other students of a similar age nationwide, took part in the 2023 UK Junior Maths Challenge.

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

I am happy to report that about two thirds of them have since earned a Bronze, Silver or Gold Award Certificate.

A special mention should go to Daniella of year 7, Luke B and Phoebe L of year 8 for achieving the highest scores in their year groups.

By dint of their scores, Luke, Phoebe and Luke D, all Gold Award winners from year 8, have also earned the right to take part in the UK Junior Kangaroo follow-on round --- so named in honour of the Australians, who were the first nation to organise a national student maths competition.

Congratulations should also be extended to the 3 other Gold, 27 Silver and 32 Bronze Award winners, and to the 6 other students who were just 1 correct answer away from a Bronze Award.

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

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

Prepare to be taxed, mentally.

Mr. Gold



Our Youth SVP Group were delighted to be invited to attend the SVP Westminster Diocese Festival on Saturday March 25th. Four members of the group travelled to Euston with Ivan and Mrs Ferguson and found the event inspiring. The students



were happy to help serve lunch to all the participants and honoured to be asked to be readers at mass. They are now keen to adapt the idea of winter Vinnie packs for homeless people, to create summer Vinnie packs.

Youth SVP Group



During KS3 PSHCE this half-term, students have been learning about the importance of water safety, using resources from the RNLI. Year 9 had a presentation from Jan Harris, a volunteer with the RNLI. Jan put the following key messages together, about staying safe sound water, for ALL students

STOP AND THINK – what are the dangers?

1. How deep is the water?
If you jump in, you might not know how deep the water is – it could vary as the tide goes in and out

2. What could be under the surface?

Rocks, rubbish – shopping trolleys, glass bottles, rusty cans, weeds and reeds which can wrap round your legs

3. The water may be very cold

Open water like rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs can be really cold– this can cause muscle cramp and cause you to gasp for air (Cold Water Shock) – water can easily get into your lungs causing drowning

4. Strong Currents

A tidal river like the Thames or at the seaside can sweep you off your feet – it is very difficult to swim in this situation

5. Stay away from the edge of cliffs and steep banks

Falling into water suddenly can cause serious injury and Cold Water Shock

STAY TOGETHER

1. Always go with someone else
2. Tell someone where you are going and when you think you'll be back
3. Carry a phone to call for help
4. At the seaside, always go to a lifeguarded beach

WHAT TO DO IN AN EMERGENCY

1. Call 999 and tell them someone is in trouble in the water
2. DON'T JUMP IN THE WATER – throw a life ring or even a football to help them to float. Keep watch until help arrives.

IF YOU SUDDENLY FALL IN THE WATER, FLOAT ON YOUR BACK UNTIL THE SHOCK HAS PASSED

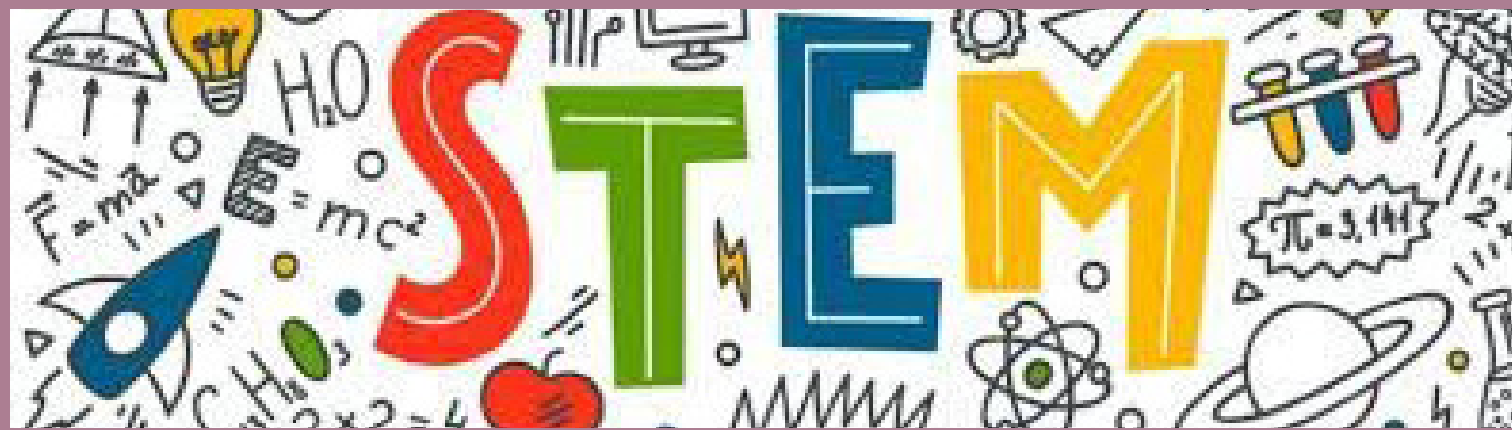
1. Lean back, keep your mouth and nose out of the water
2. Stretch out your arms and legs into a star shape
3. Gently move your hands and feet to help you float
4. When your breathing is back under control and you feel calm, swim to safety or raise your arm and shout for HELP!



Remembering Brian

Our urgency to educate our students about the importance of water safety was brought about through the tragic loss of our student, Brian Sasu, last year. As we mark the first anniversary of Brian's death, our thoughts are with the Sasu family. We hope that through our collaboration with the RNLI all students will understand the importance of staying safe around water.





We took a trip to Kew Gardens. In class we were learning about biodiversity, evolution, classification and conservation so this trip was for us to further our learning and see it for ourselves. We started our trip by visiting the temperate house and filling in a worksheet on each plant. This worksheet spoke about conservation efforts, uses of the plants and adaptations. In this module we have learned about what affects biodiversity, such as human population growth - whether it be through destroying habitats, pollution, using up the earth's resources and humanity's increased need for food. Other reasons are agriculture, we clear natural vegetation and destroy habitats. Along with Climate change and extinction. We've also been learning about why it's so important to maintain biodiversity and how it is done.

The two main terms we've come across are conservation in situ and ex situ. This means managing biodiversity in their natural environment and outside of it. An example of conservation ex situ is botanic gardens just like Kew. Seeds can be collected from the wild without causing too much disturbance and be germinated in protected surroundings. The gardens can increase the number of individual plants very quickly through many techniques. This can also help with research or for reintroducing the once endangered plants into the wild. We filled out a sheet in the temperate house which we had to answer by finding and reading the information boards on the plants within the house. We answered questions on why a species is endangered, how it's being protected as well as information on the plant's biology

and more. Later on we had to complete biological drawings. In biology there are many rules you have to follow when drawing something and this is a skill the exam board requires of us.

Also within this module is a topic on classification, evolution and adaptations. At a level, you learn about the evidence behind how an organism is classified. Cytochrome c is a protein that is not identical in all species but everything that respire has it. A protein is made of a chain of amino acids. The more similar those chains are - the more related the species are.



Y9 Girl's Stem club has been working hard learning new laboratory skills over a whole term, then finally the time came to put it all to the test! Year 9 students undertook their



Bronze Crest Award assessments, performing various scientific tests to catch drug cheats in sport. The students have used their own independent research to work before attending the session to work out what WADA would do for various suspicious samples of drugs, blood and urine. S1 and S2 were transformed into a real laboratory, with students observing the code of ethics and internal chains of custody to perform their hard learned skills. The job has not ended there, and students are hard at work making their presentations to be submitted. It's been a long process, but we've certainly got a whole cohort of budding young scientists ready to go on and achieve great things!



The annual Year 7 rounders tournament was held at Springwest Academy on Tuesday 11th June. St Mark's had enough strength and depth to enter 2 teams (the only school to do so) and the girls were excited about coming up against other schools in the borough (and having an afternoon off school! We knew from the league games that the competition would be tough but we were up for the challenge! The weather was not ideal for rounders and certainly not good for bowlers but we started as we meant to go on with wins in both games. Halfway through the afternoon, the sun went in and the heavens opened but still we soldiered on and showed our competitive spirit, battling now not only against the other teams but also the elements! Both teams had exceptional moments and everyone played well - it was great to see so many girls participating! 1 team showed a bit more consistency in the matches and finished the day without a loss and were crowned Borough Champions!!



The rounders season kicked off this year with the Year 9 borough tournament held at Heathlands School. This team has always fared quite well in this competition and this year they certainly came with the appetite to win and they didn't disappoint!! They showed no mercy as they smashed around every school that stepped forward to challenge them. They then fielded like pros, communicating supremely and giving a masterclass in teamwork to ensure that their opponents couldn't rack up the rounders! Several teams imploded under the pressure and the Year 9 girls reigned supreme, showing that they were clearly the champions of the Borough!!

Well done everyone!!

Well done to the Year 10 Rounders squad who were victorious at the Borough Rounders Rally held at the Heathlands School on Wednesday 24th May. The team played some fantastic rounders and demonstrated outstanding teamwork!



Well done to the Year 8 rounders squad who have had an amazing rounders season! Narrowly missing out on winning the Borough Rounders Rally by 2 points, but then securing top spot in the league last night with a win against Lampton School, scoring 22 rounders to 15!! A fantastic achievement! The squad have played some fantastic rounders and have gone from strength to strength with every game.

Well done to all of you who have represented this team this year! We are very proud of you!

We have had excellent numbers attending our athletics club this year and we have had several successful performances at Borough and County Level this year.

Our Year 7 girls team finished runner up in the borough competition with our Year 8 boys team finishing 3rd.

Impressive individual performance came from:

- Year 7 – Liam Mascarenhas–Gahlen – 3rd – 1500m
- Year 7 – Alex Czuchryta – 2nd – Long Jump
- Year 7 – Simeon Andorful – 3rd – Shot Putt
- Year 7 – Whitney Nsimbe – 1st – Hurdles
- Year 7 – Zuzanna Zaba – 2nd – 100m
- Year 7 – Linelle Yeboah–Afriyie – 1st – High Jump
- Year 7 – Michalina Zdanowicz – 1st – Shot Putt
- Year 8 – Simon Sserwanga – 2nd – 100m & Long Jump
- Year 8 – Thomas Hawley – 1st – 300m
- Year 8 – Boys’ Relay 3rd – 4 x 100m
- Year 8 – Ria Hutton – 3rd – 100m
- Year 8 – Hannah Shaymelo – 3rd – Shot Putt
- Year 8 – Hannah Shaymelo – 2nd – Discus
- Year 9 – Zach Krawczyk – 3rd – Long Jump
- Year 10 – Tyrone Visvakula – 2nd – 400m
- Year 10 – Coleen Barry–Atherley – 3rd – Shot Putt

St. Mark's students leading the way

During this term, some of our Year 8 students have supported the running and delivery of 2 primary school sports days at Wellington Primary School and St. Michael & St. Martin primary school.

Our students were excellent ambassadors for the school and it was great to see their confidence and self esteem improve through supporting the sporting journeys of others.

Well done to all those involved!



A LEVEL GEOGRAPHY TRIPS



At the beginning of July, Year 12 Geography students embarked on a journey across London to the Olympic Park and Brick Lane.



The areas served as the perfect fieldwork location for students to pilot data collection methods. Students collected data to answer big questions such as: ‘To what extent was the Olympic regeneration successful? Who were the real winners and losers? and ‘To what extent is there evidence of cultural diversity in the built environment of Banglatown?’ They also visited the coast to see coastal processes in action.



In helping to bridge the divide between the classroom and the real world, students left prepared for their own independent geographical investigations (after a lot of steps and many attempts at interviewing!).



These trips enable us to contrast locations within and outside of London. They have enhanced our geographical curiosity to help us develop our own NEA titles – Marcus Foord

GCSE GEOGRAPHY FIELDWORK

Y10 Geography students have been busy collecting coastal and urban fieldwork data for their Paper 2 exam. They visited the Olympic Park in Stratford, East London, as well as Hengistbury Head near Bournemouth.

They tested the following hypothesis:

The quality of life will be better in the East Village in comparison to the Carpenters Estate

The coastal management strategies at Hengistbury Head are successful



We had lots of fun! It was cool to see coastal processes in action!



It was interesting to see the Olympic Park in real life after seeing it on videos in lessons

Year 8 Geography



In April, the winners of our Geography ‘Pointless Plastic’ photography competition had a brilliant day out at the immersive BBC Earth Experience

Students described the day as:



Delighted to say

The Wardrobe

Sam Hutchison

As the director of St. Mark's production of "The Wardrobe," I couldn't be prouder of our talented students in Year 7, 8, 9, 10, and 12. This play delved into the intricate themes of relationships, class dynamics, and

hidden secrets, and our young actors brought these concepts to life with their remarkable performances.

One of the highlights of the production was undoubtedly the wardrobe itself, which took centre stage and held the secrets of young people spanning five centuries. I would like to commend Steve Collins for his exceptional craftsmanship in building the wardrobe, which became a crucial element of the play's storytelling.

Through the combined artistic efforts of Mrs. Eastwood, Catherine Soria, and Grace Fernando, the wardrobe was cleverly transformed into an antique, adding an extra layer of authenticity to the production.

The transitions between different time periods were seamlessly executed, thanks to the remarkable talents of our orchestra, directed by Ms. Welbourn, and the accompanying choir. Their music created a captivating atmosphere and guided the audience through the journey of the play. I would also like to acknowledge the brilliant work of Jackson Walsh, who designed the lighting, and Emilia Radon and Libby Duncan, who incorporated their skilful ballet dancing into the scene transitions, making them visually stunning and graceful.

Throughout the play, the young cast showcased their acting abilities and

commitment to their roles. In the opening scene we are catapulted back in time to see the portrayal of Elizabeth of York swiftly moving on to the depiction of the two Jewish scholars, the civil war, the plague, a trip to Poland and a look into the injustices faced by young workers during the 1800s.

The actor's were very professional and brought depth and authenticity to their characters.

The play culminated in the present day, where the angst of modern life, characterised by technology and social media, was powerfully portrayed. The students encapsulated the challenges faced by today's teenagers, leaving the audience with a thought-provoking message.

Overall, "The Wardrobe" was an ambitious production that was brought to life with the help of my fellow directors, Mr Rogan and Ms John who worked closely with the students to nurture their talents.

It was heartening to see the enthusiastic response from the audience, and I am immensely proud of each and every student involved. Their hard work, combined with the creative contributions of our production team, made this production a truly memorable experience.

As we celebrate the resounding success of "The Wardrobe," I would like to take a moment to reflect on my time here at St. Mark's. It is with bittersweet emotions that I share with you that this production marks my final show after thirteen incredible years as Head of Drama.

St Mark's is a truly special place and as I bid farewell, I will carry with me cherished memories of the countless productions I have worked on. The talent and passion of our students, the unwavering support of parents, and the camaraderie among staff have made this journey an unforgettable one.

To the students, you have inspired me with your passion, creativity, and commitment to the arts. It has been an absolute joy and privilege to work with such talented individuals who continually push boundaries and shine on and off the stage. Your enthusiasm and willingness to explore new horizons have transformed each day into a remarkable experience, and I am immensely grateful for the memories we have created together. Keep nurturing your artistic spirit and never stop chasing your dreams - the world is your stage,

and I have no doubt that you will continue to shine brightly wherever your journeys take you.

Ms Hutchison
Head of Drama

Year 12 Reading Chair Project Update

The Reading chair project is in its final stages of manufacture before the presentation to our clients. Year 5 from Saint Michael and Saint Martin will visit at the end of term to critically evaluate our work. The pressure is on as the deadline looms and the Year 12 students are discovering the hard way that the best made plans are just plans. Many problems and obstacles seem to get in the way of completion nearly every day. However, they come to realise that this is a normal part of the design and make process, and indeed a part of most work days for their parents and older siblings. Sometimes problem solving is what you are paid to do, and creativity and resilience will get you through and deliver a better outcome, whatever the project. We are looking forward to the visit from Year 5 and will show you the highlights of this event in the new Academic year. In the meantime find your own reading chair and get stuck into a book or two this summer.

Emsley de Souza:
My Chair was inspired through the Year 5 Students love for nature and animals from the rainforest. I ended up choosing the design of a snake to act as a frame and added a three piece chair in-between the supports. I hope my chair will motivate the children to read more often as it is a vital part of shaping a young mind! The children will be visiting next Friday to see the final product and I'm hoping for a positive reaction and some motivation to push them to read more. In the meantime testing is critical to our design process!



Andrew Bermudez:
Who likes ice cream? Everyone does! That's why I've made a chair based on the best dessert. My chair hopes to inspire children to read more, making them as cool as ice cream. I have quickly adapted to CAD (3D design) to produce a construction plan and vision for my chair: this allowed me to see my mistakes and change them. I am intrigued to see the reactions of the year 5 students and can't wait to hear their feedback.



David Aleksandar
The animal theme was popular with the Year 5s. Marine life is affected by unsustainable human activity which a big issue even for children this age. They can engage in this topic and research it in books in the LRC



Arminas Petronis
Can you guess the exotic plant that has inspired this design? The colours are a clue. Once you sit in it you are 'trapped' until you have done enough reading.



Kevin Pangilinan
This chair is inspired by a musical theme. One of the biggest challenges in the final week has been to get the harp strings tight enough to support the reader. Initially it seemed impossible, but some energetic trial and error has solved this problem. Time to paint!

Shanon Fernandes:
Children like scary things and the Year 5s are no different. You only have to watch cartoons from all eras and look at the books this age groups read. Our readers can befriend this spider, and explore many topics from being scared of them to understanding why they are NOT insects!



Milan Trehan:
My chair is based off the theme of space. I have made a chair in the shape of a half crescent moon with stars as arm rests. I have developed many key skills in the chair project such as CAD and making skills. I have used new methods like slats which have allowed me to create a unique shape for a chair. This project had been very beneficial as there have been lots of learning curves for me such as the sizing of my chair. There are lessons that I have learnt and I will use these skills further into my A level course when making my final project.

CREATE AND COMMUNICATE CLUB

A small band of Year 7s have been meeting weekly since January to talk, create lots of things and most importantly share biscuits! We have made lots of things over the weeks, played board games and planted some seeds.

Our origami, marble runs, geo mag constructions and marbled paper using shaving foam were brilliant.

Paper flowers for spring



Marbled paper with oat milk was not quite as successful, but the patterns in the bowls looked great.



Marble paper with shaving foam



Marble runs with pegs and a ruler!



At St Mark's we are fortunate in having a number of staff who received the Rainbows Bereavement and Loss training, facilitated by the Catholic Children's Society. This was organised by Mrs Morillon and we are delighted that, after Easter,



we were able to start running another bereavement peer support group, for some of our students. The group meets weekly, with two staff members, who lead the sessions.

For more information about Rainbow Bereavement Support see: Rainbows Bereavement Support GB <https://rainbowsgb.org/>



CHARITIES

As shared with parents and carers, we have been running a fundraising campaign from Lent until the end of May to support our chosen charities: CAFOD; St Mark's In this Together Campaign and the great projects Ms Joyce is leading on and The Elysium Project in Chennai, India. THANK YOU for all your support, particularly during these difficult times. With your generosity our fundraising efforts (separate to the Faith in Action initiative) have so far raised £2,465.00. Some of this fundraising came through our participation in the Bag2School campaign.



Our Year 12 students, through their Faith in Action have been busy organising events to raise funds for Sparrow Schools in South Africa and the other community events they run. The Staff vs 6th form basketball match was popular as was a whole school hide and seek; Krispy Kreme donut sale; Cinema night; Easter Egg hunt ! So far over £1000 has been raised through FIA initiatives.

'The 6th formers have been incredibly enthusiastic and lower school students are keen to get involved. The 6th formers were especially delighted as they beat the teachers at basketball for the first time in a long time. The hide and seek was especially successful with more than 200 students taking part.' The FIA food drive and Sanitary items drive was also hugely successful. Thank you again - this was all donated to SsMichael and Martin SVP.

FAITH IN ACTION

