



CONTACT



The Newsletter of St Alban's Catholic High School

Autumn Term 2019
Edition No. 2

Comments from the Headteacher

Matt Baker

As a result of recent successful bids from government funding streams, I am delighted to show you three superb projects delivered on, (or ahead of) time.

Our first upgrade took us forward environmentally, with the installation of our solar panels. These have already begun paying us back.



Secondly, the toilets in the 'A' block have been a perennial problem and needed a serious face lift! These have been replaced by a brand new build, opening out the space and creating a safe and modern look.



Thirdly, our new windows throughout the main block were installed this term. As well as an aesthetic improvement, these too will do so much to improve our environmental footprint!

Finally, thanks to all your donations and the work of the Friends' of St Alban's we also celebrate the delivery of our brand new minibus! It is a superb vehicle! We thank you all for supporting the events arranged by the Friends' which have contributed to making this possible for the school.



Congratulations to Year 11 for making it through the mock examinations – I look forward to sharing your grades so far with you next week.

We had also just had the latest Reflection Days, and I must press upon you the impact of them, and other Sacramental experiences, that set us apart from secular settings. The 'how and why' we grow our students is as important as the 'what' – thank you to all of you for supporting this element of the school. Further Reflection Days are planned as follows:

- Year 8 Reflection Days - Thursday 30 January and Thursday 06 February
- Year 9 Reflection Days - Thursday 5 March and Thursday 12 March

The season of advent is upon us again. With all the political noise going on this has crept up on us somewhat! All I ask of our families is that we hold true to the meaning of Christmas by prioritising hope, love, peace and joy. In this way, we hold true to our mission in Christ – to await His coming with wonder, gratitude, delight, and serenity.

Farewell

At the end of this term we say farewell to the following members of staff:

Mr Greenaway has worked in the Maths department at St Alban's since 2006, having worked here previously from 1995. Over this time, he has been the Head of Department and Lead Practitioner for Mathematics. I am sure those of you with both current and older children will have appreciated the brilliant teaching he has brought to the school. His dedication to the school has been outstanding – his devotion to education is clear to any of us that have worked with him. He leaves for promotion at another school; we all wish him the best in this new leadership role.

Ms Templeman was appointed as Head of Drama in 2011. Since then, Drama has been enjoyed by all, right through to A Level. Students have enjoyed her expertise in the subject area, developing strong trusting relationships with the young people; ones vital to draw out great performances! We thank her for leading whole school performances, the last being *Oliver!* We wish you well as you move on to life in a new drama-based career.

Miss Cross has been with us in the languages department since 2017, enjoying excellent relationships with her Form Group and her classes. She is known as an incredibly hard working member of staff, and she has been instrumental in developing the PYF (Preparing for Your Future) curriculum for Key Stage 4. She leaves us for promotion and we send her every blessing in this role as a future school leader!

Mrs Jarrett has worked in the languages department since January 2019, teaching French. She has worked diligently as a great team player, always with a positive attitude and dedicated to the young people in her care. She is leaving us to change career and branch off in a different direction in her life. We are sad to say goodbye, but obviously wish her well.



CHRISTMAS IS THE CELEBRATION OF THE BIRTH OF JESUS, THE SAVIOUR OF MANKIND

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Key Upcoming Diary Dates

Monday 16 December 2019	Year 11 Mock Results Day
Wednesday 18 December 2019	Last Day of term, students dismissed at 2.00pm
Tuesday 07 January 2020	Start of Spring Term – all students return
Monday 13 – Friday 17 January 2020	Year 13 Mock Exams
Wednesday 15 January 2020	Year 11 Parents' Evening
Wednesday 29 January 2020	Year 10 Parents' Evening

Attendance

Mr Moulding, Attendance and Admissions Officer

Suffolk County Council have updated their policy and guidance regarding children missing from education and school attendance. Of particular note:

If you take your child abroad for an extended period in term-time, without authorisation from the school, then you may lose their place at the school. When you return to the UK, you will need to re-apply for a school place and you may not get your preferred school. Note that most Suffolk schools are full and this can mean a place is not immediately available. This has already been an issue for some parents; several families who went abroad before the end of the summer term lost their children's school places.

Suffolk County Council will now issue Fixed Penalty Notices for unauthorised absences, including term-time holidays, only once. If there is another such unauthorised absence in the future then it will mean a court appearance, with fines typically between £500 and £1000 per parent. This is to discourage parents who were building the £60 fines into their holiday budget or whose children regularly have unauthorised absences.

Student Behaviour on Buses

Mr Horne, Head of Pastoral Care and Designated Safeguarding Lead

We are currently working alongside Ipswich Buses to address issues of poor behaviour and safety concerns that have been raised by both drivers and members of the public. The real concern is that one of our students is going to get injured at some point, and the likelihood is that it could be very serious. Safety is a priority, and therefore student conduct whilst on public transport is really important so that everyone can enjoy their journey in safety, and the driver can focus on doing their job.

Members of the School Leadership Team will be monitoring students at Tower Ramparts in the mornings, and we will also be holding assemblies with the help of representatives from Ipswich Buses on how we can improve passenger safety.

YEAR 11 Student Achievement – December 2019

Mr Corless, Deputy Headteacher

As we approach the end of term, I thought it appropriate to update parents of Year 11 students about our recent mock examinations. The rationale behind running these exams is to provide our students with an experience of the 'real' public examinations to be held in the summer term. We realise that for all our students this can be a challenging and stressful time coping with all the subjects being tested within a fixed time frame. I can assure you all that this will not be like this next summer as exams are separated over a much longer period of time running from May-June. As a requirement from the exam regulator JCQ all centres delivering public examinations must also factor in a contingency day which next year will be Wednesday 24 June 2020. If there is an emergency during the summer 2020 series, exams may be rescheduled up to and including this date. Therefore, all candidates both GCSE & A Level must be available until this day. Where candidates choose not to be available for a rescheduled examination(s) for reasons other than those traditionally covered by special consideration they will not be eligible for enhanced grading arrangements. As a school we are in the process of collecting data from the recent mock examinations and also additional Year 11 progress data. Our targets for the current cohort are both challenging but aspirational. We want to ensure that the young people in our care achieve the very best but also provide them with the best start for post 16 education. The mock results day will be on Monday 16th December during morning registration. Students will be provided with a breakdown of their results and the next steps are crucial to students needing to work with their subject teachers and parents to ensure they achieve their potential. The issue of attendance is crucial to any student if they are to achieve their target grades. I have provided a table below outlining the impact that lower attendance can have on their performance in the public examinations.

How my attendance might impact on my GCSE results

Attendance %	Attendance as a grade	Description
100%	8-9	Well done, your attendance is excellent. You are maintaining your chances to make excellent progress.
98 – 99%	7-8	
97%	6	
96%	5	You are at the point where your attendance is starting to have a negative impact on your progress. You need to attend St Alban's every day from now on. You are just above the St Alban's attendance target of 96%.
93 – 96%	4	Your attendance is below the St Alban's target of 96%. You are missing a large number of lessons reducing your chance of making progress consistently. Your Parent Care is liable for a fine of up to £2,500.
91 – 92%	3	
90%	2	You are on a 'Persistent Absence' from St Alban's. You are absent at least one day every two weeks. Your progress will be minimal and you will not realise your true potential.
88-89%	1	
88% and less	U	

Our current Year 11 attendance is 96.9% and at this point last year the Year 11 attendance was 96.6%.

Once we start back in the new term it is imperative that your son/daughter attends the exam support sessions run over a two-week timetable. Your support is vital in ensuring all students achieve their potential.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Mrs Shemming and Mrs Carter, as well as our team of invigilators and support staff, who manage the mock exams during a busy time in our school calendar.

St Vincent de Paul (6th Form Beatitudes Group) – a Christmas Appeal

As mentioned in a Parent mail last week, I would be grateful if you could encourage your son/daughter to collect items from the list below to fill hamper boxes. Ideally if each Form group could do this then we would be able to donate a significant contribution to FIND (Ipswich) and support our 'Faith in Action' Beatitudes group this year. Any donations would be greatly appreciated.

SECTION 48 - RELIGIOUS EDUCATION INSPECTION

In the past, Catholic schools have been open to government inspection of all aspects of their work other than simply Religious Education. Inspections were carried out by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools (HMI) who reported to the Secretary of State on the quality of education provided. The Education (Schools) Act 1992 transferred this responsibility to the Chief Inspector for England who heads the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED). This was further ratified by the Education Act 2005 and the Education and Inspections Act 2007.

Under Section 48 of the Act, the governors of Catholic schools must now ensure that Religious Education is inspected at prescribed intervals. These are known as Section 48 Inspections.

The report on Religious Education (RE) is produced for the Bishop, who under Canon Law 804 and 806, has responsibility for schools in the diocese, and for the Governing Body of the schools concerned.

Our school was inspected in September and we are delighted to share our Section 48 Inspection report which can be viewed by clicking [here](#)

May I take this opportunity to wish you all a very Happy and Holy Christmas and thank you for supporting our community of St Alban's.



Chaplaincy Update

Miss Edwards, Lay Chaplain



'This is how Jesus Christ came to be born. His mother, Mary was betrothed to Joseph but before they were married she was found to be with child. Her husband Joseph, being an upright man wanted to divorce her informally. But an angel appeared to him 'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because she has conceived by the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son and you must name him Jesus, because he is the one who is to save his people from their sins.' When Joseph woke up he did what the angel had told him to do: he took his wife to his home; he had not had intercourse with her and she gave birth to a son: and he named him Jesus.'

Matthew 1: 18-25

Christmas thought: As we begin to celebrate this great feast, will we make sure that make space in our families and homes for Jesus to be born?

Bishop's Visit

Bishop Alan came to the school for a pastoral visit on 12 November and celebrated Mass for the school community. He spoke to staff and students about the need for each of us to recognise the dignity and worth of each human being as well as recognising our own value as part of God's creation.

Our Sixth Form leaders then had an opportunity to share their vision for SVP and CAFOD with the school community.

The day finished with a lunch in the staff room where Bishop Alan met with all members of staff.



Remembrance Day

This year the school focused their minds on the human endeavours of individuals during the last two great wars. Students and staff were told about the gallantry of Jan Jacewicz, who in recognition of his work flying for the Polish, French and English Air Forces he won 19 medals, one of which was the Vituti Militari- the Polish equivalent of the Victoria Cross. Jan was the second most highly decorated Polish flyer of the Second World War, a true war hero. His two granddaughters in Year 7 laid the wreath in his memory. Roses were also laid to remember the contribution made by citizens of different countries around the world.

Red Wednesday

Students and staff were invited to come into school wearing a visible item of red clothing. This was to highlight the thousands of Christians around the world who are persecuted for their faith. Students were invited to come and celebrate Mass on behalf of the millions who are denied that right.

CAFOD

In December the CAFOD Sixth Form leaders led assemblies highlighting the UN goal of Justice for all. Within the assembly Anagan 12JA gave a powerful testimony of what life was like as a refugee in Sri Lanka during the Civil War. Students were reminded that they could make a difference by supporting the Winter Market. It is their intention that we raise sufficient funds on that day to buy more water pumps so that access to clean water is available to more people.



Advent Experience

Year 7 are preparing for Christmas during their RE lessons. Prayer Stations are set up around the Chapel for students to focus on the main themes of Christmas; God's love, care, joy, peace and hope.



Scientist of the Month

Miss Dunderdale

Every month one student is chosen from each Science group to be a Scientist of the Month. These are students who have shown consistent effort, resilience and focus in all their lessons. We believe that these are the qualities which allow students to progress academically and as individuals.

October's Scientists were:

Fintan 7GD	Tiana 7CD	Sean 7WR		
Luc 8FS	Ollie 8PG	Charlotte 8FS		
Madeleine 9KE	Lily 9KF	Zac 9HR	Isabelle 9BR	Kuba 9KE
Olivia 10WS	Leejay 10DU	Daniel 10NC	Caine 10PT	Bartosz 10DU
Emilin 11SK	Daniel 11TO	Emily 11TO	Ebenezer 11GI	Amy 11SR
Charlotte 11TO	Bernadette 11SR			



Black History Month - Rewriting the Narrative

Miss Alleyne

Last month, we celebrated the contributions that Black people have made to our culture and society. We adopted the theme 'Rewriting the Narrative' to focus not on the traditional figures of Black History, but all those whose contributions are often overlooked or forgotten about. There were loads of events running over the course of the month and we were amazed by the contributions of our students!



Poster Competition

Mr Harpur and Mrs Wise ran a competition challenging students to find the most obscure figure of Black History and create a poster educating us of their contributions to society and culture. They were overwhelmed with responses, and their winners were:

Year 7: Moses 7GD

Year 8: Erin 8GE

Year 9: Nkosinoxolo 9KF

Year 10: 10RS

Well done to all those who participated! You can find the posters displayed in the A Block Corridor

Debates and Discussions

Every Thursday Lunchtime during the month, we gathered to discuss issues surrounding Black culture and history. Students from all areas of our school community came to share ideas, voice their beliefs, and challenge each other respectfully and intelligently. We discussed issues such as; 'Who can and who can't use the N word?' and 'Can white people be the victims of racism'. One week, we had over 70 students turn up! Thank you to all those who gave up their lunch to make these discussions so powerful and informative. Look out for future opportunities to debate like this again!



Wear Red Day

On Friday 18 October, we held a non-uniform day in which we asked students to wear something red. We raised an incredible £538 which will go to the charity 'Show Racism the Red Card' who work to tackle the issue of racism in sport, schools and the workplace. Students also had the opportunity to discuss the shocking England v Bulgaria Football match from the previous evening with their forms.

The Great Black British Bake Off

Students were challenged to create a cake or a bake that represented Black History Month to them. Entries were then sold at a bake sale in which an additional £35 was raised for our 'Show Racism the Red Card' charity. The judges (Mr Corless, Miss Foster & Miss Alleyne) had the task of tasting each of the entries and picking the winners. Although they were all delicious and innovative, the winners were Emily 8FS and Shannai 9BR.



Pat Swann Celebrates her 70th Birthday

Pat Swann has been a receptionist at St Albans Catholic High School in Ipswich for for 35 years and is celebrating her 70th birthday.

Adoring children made a giant fuss of a beloved school receptionist in Ipswich described as "like mum to everyone" as she turned 70 while still working at the academy.

Pat Swann started at St Albans Catholic High School in Ipswich 35 years ago, when it needed some cover for lunchtime supervisors.

She quickly fell in love with the Digby Road school, which her children had attended, for its "lovely" and "really caring atmosphere".

Later becoming a receptionist alongside her lunchtime duties, she quickly became a stalwart who youngsters say hello to every morning and even talk to about their problems.

Even though she is well beyond retirement age, Mrs Swann has no plans to retire because she loves working with the children at the school so much.



"It is just a lovely school with a lovely feel," she said as pupils broke into a chorus of "happy birthday" during assemblies.

"It's a really caring school and we do our very best for the kids every day. Everyone will do anything to help each other.

"Why wouldn't you want to stay? It's more like fun every day.

"The kids can tell you anything and they do. They're all great. I treat them like my own."

Mrs Swann believes she has earned the respect of the youngsters *"just by giving them the same respect as I would an adult and not talking down to them"*.

Each of her eight children attended St Albans Catholic High, as well as many of her 20 grandchildren. And in September, one of her five great-grandchildren will start attending the school.

Of the students, she said: *"They have all said 'happy birthday' to me and we had a special Mass at the chapel, which was full.*

"The Catholic ethos is still really important in schools - it's just about caring for each other and doing what you can for humanity."

Parental Support

Mrs Land, Key Stage 4 Student Support Lead

Parents might like to visit the Student Support page on our website (link below)

<https://www.st-albans.suffolk.sch.uk/Student-Support/>

The section is regularly updated with useful information for both parents and students, with details also available of relevant agencies and parenting programmes.

CEI / AG Update

Mrs Carter, Careers Co-ordinator

Advice and a Slice

Advice and a Slice is now in full swing here at St. Albans. Being well attended by Years 9 through to 6th Form students.

The fantastic range of guest speakers visiting us during lunchtime on Wednesdays so far have included Suffolk Highways, BT, Suffolk New College, Otley College, Network for East Anglian Collaborative Outreach (neaco) and AIM - Apprenticeships.

Thank you to:

Stuart Heald of Suffolk Highways giving a very informative talk as a Chartered Engineer. Explaining to our students the different career routes that may be taken to achieve this role.

Stephen Johnson of BT. Giving an insight of his careers gaining a degree at University of Hull and how he progressed through BT to achieve his role as lead researcher into 5G network convergence.

Suffolk New College & Otley College Team – Games Design & Forensics

Games Design - not just about playing games but also how to develop ideas and learn the basics of design. Moving on to consider the programmes themselves looking at animation, art design, programming and sound.

Forensics - This study programme provides students with the underpinning knowledge and vocational skills for forensic science and criminal investigation. Designed to introduce learners to the foundations of knowledge in traditional sciences and criminal investigation including; biology, chemistry, physics, and crime scene analysis. The programme and teaching resources have been selected by experts with experience in the forensic science industry.



Network for East Anglian Collaborative Outreach (neaco)

Students were given practical advice on writing a CV enabling them to advertise themselves so that employers will hopefully want to meet with them. The Including what a CV should look like, the content of their CV- do's and don'ts, submitting CV to employers – do's and don'ts. Each student went away with a CV information sheet.



Apprenticeships (AIM) - Lily Sinclair

Once again our students were fully engaged as they were guided through what an apprenticeship is. The different types of apprenticeships available and what sectors in the world of work can they find an apprenticeship. Asking many questions.

We would gratefully for your support in encouraging our young people to come along to these sessions. They may sign up with their Form Tutor or pop into the Careers Office.

University - Year 13

Year 13 students have been busy completing their UCAS applications, more than 50% of the year group have already submitted. Students are already in receipt of offers and interview invitations. We have organised mock pharmacy interviews (MMIs) for 5 students, and Medical MMIs for 4 students. Every student with an invitation for interview, will be offered a mock interview in school.

Year 12 – Mock Interviews

All Year 12 student have also experienced a **mock interview**, with a local employer this term.

Each student received verbal and written feedback on performance.

Interviewers commented on how exceptional the Year 12s were and how knowledgeable they are about their futures.

Year 12 – Work Experience week commences on Monday 9th December.

Members of staff look forward to visiting them in the workplace.



Politics

Students in Sixth Form have met several local candidates for the local elections, and have been keen to challenge them on their party manifestos.

Year 11 - Career Interviews

During the year all Year 11 students will be having a 1:1 careers interview. These are progressing well and we hope to have all Year 11 seen by February half term.

Year 10 – Questionnaire

All Year 10 students have recently received a questionnaire to see what career areas they are interested in. This helps when planning our careers programme to ensuring their needs are met.

Year 10 - Business GCSE students

Year 10 students had a lesson presented by Liz and Kim from HMRC to give them an insight into the different types of tax.

Alumni

At the start of the year Alex Mayes returned to speak to our Sixth Formers about his Year in Industry at Austin Martin and his experience of University. In January Colleen Cumbers is returning to talk about applying to University, she is currently reading French at Oxford University. We currently have 55 past students registered on our alumni list and we aim to utilise our alumni further.

Thank you again to all our guest speakers for supporting our Careers programme. We look forward to working with you and all future employers.

Wishing you a Merry and Peaceful Christmas.



Careers Team

Friends' of St Alban's (FoSA) Update

Sharon Cullum, Chair of FoSA

FoSA would just like to thank all the teachers, parents/carers and children that attended and supported our Christmas Craft Market at school on Saturday 16 November. A special thank you goes to IT Teacher and FoSA member Jane Broxton for creating and organising the event which raised £543 towards the minibus fund!

I would like to thank all our members past and present for the making the time, and working so hard, to raise money for the school minibus.

We still welcome any second hand uniform which you can hand into reception, where you can also purchase from. They are always on sale on Parents' Evenings or you can email us at friends@st-alban's.sch.uk/FoSA.

We also have a fabulous selection of prizes and will be selling raffle tickets before the Carol Concert as well as refreshments and mince pies!

Fireworks Fun Night

This year's fireworks were amazing and as always we appreciate the hard work of the FofSA, particularly Kelsey Nichols who runs the evening.

Many of our 6th form students volunteered to help this year, in fact there are too many to name here. It was great to see so many of them involved in helping set up the evening and running their own stalls. The waffles were a success, games great fun, beautiful face painting and some muddy footballers.

Many thanks to all of you who were involved.



Christmas Market

On Saturday 16 November FoSA held their Christmas Market. Around 20 Crafters and Stall Holders attended the event, with a complete mix of delights from sweets to bath bombs, hand crafted jewellery, crochet and homewares. The talent on show was just amazing!

It was a slow start to the morning but then visitors began to trickle through, many staying for tea and cakes followed by another browse around. The atmosphere was relaxing with many jolly conversations between customers and stall holders.

We would like to thank parents, staff and stall holders for their generous donations towards the raffle prizes, including a £50 Laura Ashley as top prize.

As previously mentioned by the Chair of FoSA a total of £543 was raised which will go toward the cost of much needed new Minibus.

If you visited the event then many thanks for your support....if you missed it, then look out for the next event - bigger and better!

If you would like to get involved, please contact the school on 01473 726178 and leave your details.



Gymnast Success

Mrs Ward

Well done to Luke (7MD) for competing at the British Gymnastics National Finals in Birmingham earlier this month. Luke is part of the East of Region team, in which they placed 1st overall in the competition.

Luke was also lucky enough to meet Olympic Gymnast Daniel Purvis (left) and Commonwealth Games Gymnast Frank Baines (Right)



Photography Exhibition at Ipswich Hospital

Ms A Nield

Former St Alban's student, Julia Kapkowska, currently has an exhibition of her stunning photography displayed at the Pain Clinic within Ipswich Hospital.

Julia has just returned from studying in Hong Kong as part of her Law Degree. During her year abroad, Julia travelled extensively though out Asia and made excellent use of her photographic skills. As a former student of Photography at St Albans, Julia was keen for us to see her work and happily agreed to take part in our ongoing photographic project run with the hospital.



We have been supplying a regular rotation of images to the hospital in order to enhance the waiting area and visually support patients by adding a positive distraction during their hospital visit. We are delighted to be part of this project, supporting our local community, and are very proud of the work of both our current and former students.

Maths Support

Mrs Hind

Many thanks to those 6th Form students who have taken part in the Maths Support sessions over this half-term, helping younger students. Sessions are now paused for the Christmas break and will restart on 13 January 2020.



Senior Maths Challenge

Mr Silk

Well done to Oliver and Connor in Year 12 who achieved the highest scores on the Senior Maths Challenge in November. Both students achieved the **Gold Award** and qualified for the next round of the competition which is an excellent achievement.

The Year 12 students, Oliver 12MT, Connor 12NW, Connor 12GY and William 12JA gave an excellent performance representing the school in the Senior Team Maths Challenge on Thursday 28 November. The competition involved 3 hours of mathematical challenges against teams from other top schools across Suffolk and Essex

Well done to all of students who took part.

GameAnglia Event

Mr Robinson

On 06 November 2019, the Year 12 and Year 13 A-level Computer Science students attended GameAnglia at the University of Suffolk.

The event was focused on the skills needed to join the Games Industry and starting your own business in the industry. This was achieved through lectures and chance to speak to professionals, alumni and current game design students.



We've designed a simple checklist to give you peace of mind regarding your child's safety on the internet.

Set your children's device up before you give it to them so you know they're safe online as soon as they start playing



Get started



Set parental controls on your broadband to prevent your children seeing things they shouldn't



For smart phones check parental controls are also set up on the mobile network

Set up the device safely



Use the device setting so you can only download age appropriate apps and games



Disable location services so your child doesn't unintentionally share their location with others



Set up password control or disable in-app purchasing so big bills are not run up accidentally



Download age appropriate apps you're happy for your child to use

Talk about staying safe



If your children are 8-10 years old, download our parent / child Internet Matters app to help you talk about e-safety issues in an interactive way



Be aware of key issues and how to discuss them with your children so they know how to stay safe online



If your child is using social networking apps check their profile and privacy settings, making sure they are not sharing personal or private information with people they do not know

