

COLLEGE

Term 2 – 2017-18

From the Head Teacher



NEWS

A Merry Christmas

It gives me great pleasure to inform you that the 2017 summer examination results placed the school's performance in the top 12% of schools in the country for both attainment and progress, and the top 8% for the percentage of pupils who attained a standard pass in both English and Maths. This is a tremendous achievement that we can all be proud of. Our current Year 11 pupils recently prepared for, and sat, their mock examinations. Whilst challenging, the experience was positive and we hope will act as a springboard for next summer. I am sure that news of last year's success will inspire them to continue working hard.

The students have been given many opportunities to prepare themselves during the season of Advent with reconciliation services, assemblies and tutor led morning reflections that have focused on Hope, Love, Joy and Peace. In addition to this Year 7-11 have supported a local foodbank, and the sixth form have supported local provision for the homeless, culminating in a sleep out. The sixth form also visited 'The Wingfield' residential home to perform a nativity play, sing carols and give out cakes and presents. I know that this annual event is both looked forward to and greatly appreciated by the residents. I am grateful to the many staff who have been involved in these activities and, in doing so, ensure that our students, in amongst the business of Christmas, reflect on its true meaning and have the opportunity to grow in faith.

In addition to our Advent preparations, a great deal of other activities have taken place including, All Saints Mass, STEM Festival of Engineering, Carol Service, Gideon bibles to Year 7, Young Enterprise Christmas trade fair, rugby leadership programme, international film festival, hockey tournament, Taste of Food masterclass, netball festival, book fair, Bath fashion museum, Street Car theatre trip, Berlin trip, Christmas dinners, Presentation Evening, mid Wilts rugby cup, BOOM disco. This list is by no means exhaustive but certainly exemplifies the breadth of opportunities available to our students. As always I am grateful to the staff for enabling these to happen.

I wish you all a wonderful Christmas.

Joe Alsop
Head Teacher

Jubilee Year 1967-2017

Berlin Trip 8 – 11 December 2017

Day 1

We met at school this morning at 2.30 am to begin our journey to Berlin. The coach took us to Heathrow and from there we went through baggage check in and passport control then into the Departure Lounge where we had breakfast.

At 6.30 am we started boarding and by 7.25 am we were ready for take-off on board British Airways flight BA990. Arriving at Berlin Tegel Airport at 10.15 am (9.15 am UK time) we were met by a bus to take us to our hotel. This was located in a converted mill building. At the hotel we had time to drop our bags, change shoes etc and then onto the tram and train to meet our guides who would take us on a walking tour of Berlin. We were split into two groups and were shown the Berlin Wall, the Topography of Terror which is an indoor and outdoor museum situated next to the Berlin Wall; the site where Hitler's Bunker had been but which has been deliberately filled in to ensure it does not become a shrine to Hitler; the SS building; Checkpoint Charlie; the line dividing East and West Germany;

the Brandenburg Gate, at which there was a pro-Palestinian demonstration next to the American Embassy building; the Jewish Memorial and the Soviet Memorial in the Tiergarten. Our final destination was the Reichstag Building which has a wonderful classical exterior but is very modern inside. This building houses the Government Chamber into which the visitor can look from the foyer and also down into from the first floor. Above the chamber is a glass dome and visitors are able to walk up a spiral slope to the top and have a spectacular view of Berlin.

After our visit we returned to the hotel for dinner, allocation of rooms and bed. After an early start and a walk of approximately 12 miles, we were very tired and happy to go to bed.

Day 2

Breakfast at 7.00 am and on the coach at 8.15 am. This was to be an emotional day as we visited Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp. It is a very still place and was difficult to contemplate how anyone survived such a dreadful experience. The Camp is now mostly razed to the ground with few buildings surviving but which house exhibitions and commentary on

Golden Book Nominees for October 2017

| | |
|---------|---|
| Year 7 | Adrian Wrona (7F) for making an excellent start at St Augustine's, working hard and showing kindness to and supporting others. |
| Year 8 | Maciej Stefanski (8F) for always having such a positive attitude in science lessons. |
| Year 9 | Jodie Watts (9F) for being kind and supportive to those around her. |
| Year 10 | James Gordon (10T) for being the top GCSEpod user. |
| Year 11 | Ella Veakins (11B) for excellent work in Art. |

Golden Book Nominees for November 2017

| | |
|---------|--|
| Year 7 | Harriet Marshall (7T) for playing The Last Post at the Remembrance Service at St John's. |
| Year 8 | Harry Stamp (8C) for efforts relating to the School Production. |
| Year 9 | Jacob Tripp (9T) for an excellent piece in History entitled 'How did the industrial revolution change Britain' and Sasha Minnis (9M) for excellent academic achievement in her CATs tests. |
| Year 10 | Kacper Jedlinski (10M) and Lydia Watkins (10T) for increasingly thorough and high quality work in RE. |
| Year 11 | James Phillips (11B) for exceptional performance in the mock exams as a result of dedication to his studies. |

Golden Book Nominees for December 2017

| | |
|---------|---|
| Year 7 | Luke Kute (7F) for singing a solo in the College Carol Service. |
| Year 8 | Joseph Ford (8F) for efforts relating to the School Production. |
| Year 9 | Paula Halama (9M) and Emily Wawer (9B) for winning the West Wilts Badminton Championship and Felicity Gurr (9F) for winning the West Wilts Badminton Championship and for the fantastic textiles work in DT by making a cushion with a different design printed on both sides. |
| Year 10 | Nicole Medin (10M) for creativity and independent work in RE. |
| Year 11 | Elena Borthwick (11M), Maya Caswell (11C) and Arkadiusz Rudnik (11F) for consistently excellent homework, classwork and class contribution in History. |

what life would have been like. Over an entrance gate in German is the stark statement "Arbeit macht frei" translated to "Work sets you free". It was a very flat open area – at the best of times would seem cold and depressing, but we visited it with snow falling and a temperature of -6 (with wind chill), adding to the atmosphere.

From the cold of the camp to a house in Berlin where the destiny of millions of Jews was discussed entitled "The Final Solution of the Jewish Question". We had a very interesting and informative talk from the guide and there many artefacts supporting this conference.

To raise our spirits after a difficult day we went bowling before returning to our hotel for dinner. After dinner we all decided to brave the cold and visit the wonderful Christmas market to buy gifts for our families. Arriving back at the hotel just after 10.00 pm it was straight off to bed.

Day 3

Today the plan was to visit the Deutsches Historisches Museum for the morning. This is housed in beautiful, almost pink stone building. The inside of the museum provided plenty of space to wander around and look at the many exhibits which gave a wonderful history of Germany throughout the ages. Students concentrated on the areas necessary for their GCSE History examinations whilst staff had the luxury of simply wandering to look at those areas of particular interest.

After lunch we visited the Alte Nationalgalerie (National Art Gallery). This – another beautiful building – houses not only an exhibition of Rodin sculptures but a range of well known – and not so well known artists – such as Monet, Manet, Renoir, Degas and Cezanne. Of particular interest to those GCSE Art students on the trip was a collection by Friedrich.

From the museum we headed back to the Christmas Market and then to the hotel to collect our bags for our homeward journey.

Unfortunately, due to the snow, our time at the airport was spent sat on the floor whilst **Mr Sturdee** and **Mr Attlesey** tried to sort out our travel due to our flight being cancelled. We arrived at the airport at 5.20 pm and eventually left at about 12.15 am to return to the hotel we had left seven hours earlier. We were told that we would have a phone call at about 11.00 am on Monday to confirm flight details. This arrived earlier than expected and at 10.00 am we were again on a coach back to the airport.

After another rather long day we finally arrived back at St Augustine's at 8.30 pm on Monday.

Library Half Price Book Fair

Many thanks to all who supported the Library Half Price Book Fair. It was run as an Apprentice-style challenge by the Year 12 Economics students who sold £675.34 and was also a useful "real life" business experience for them. Well done to the Cupcake Monday team, led by **Ellie Brown**, who won the challenge. The Book Fair also gave an opportunity for the library to select new books, including *Monster* by Michael Grant, a follow on to the *Gone* series; *Moonrise*, an older read, by the popular author Sarah Crossan and the graphic novel *The Adventures of John Blake* by Philip Pullman. 1984 by George Orwell sold the most copies; other bestsellers included the emotional but uplifting *Wonder* by R J Palacio and comic *Bad Dad* by David Walliams. The library also has a copy of the brilliant, imaginative latest children's book *La*

Belle Sauvage by Philip Pullman, which can be read before his Northern Lights series.

Food Students' Masterclass

GCSE Food students in Year 10 and 11 and students in Year 9 who wish to take Food next year took part in a fantastic masterclass cooking demonstration and workshop. Taste of Game and The Food Teachers Centre launched the "Game Changer" initiative in June which aims to teach 60,000 students to cook game by 2020. It fitted perfectly with the new exam courses where students have to develop high-level skills such as preparing meat, understanding how animals are reared and prepared and how seasonal, local and nutritious foods contribute to British cuisine. The workshops were led by a very enthusiastic Simon Gray, senior associate of FTC. Once the students got over the initial shock of having to joint and debone the pheasants themselves, they took part with such enthusiasm, preparing pheasant meatballs with sun-dried tomato sauce. Simon said he hasn't worked in a school with such a lovely atmosphere!

Contact Details for Parents/ Guardians whilst absent from the family home

Please kindly ensure that in the event of parent/guardian's absence from the family home it is important that contact details of who is looking after your child/children are given to the Admin dept. with dates of the absence.

This is especially important in case of a medical emergency.

Basketball Success

Success at their first ever basketball competition saw **Miss Portingale's** Year 9 girls through to the Wiltshire School Games finals to be held in Marlborough on 18th January. After a term of basketball in PE lessons during Term 1, the girls were ready, if not a little nervous, to test their skills in a competitive environment and in doing so, beat some tough opposition who are established on the basketball scene. Well done girls; time for some training before competing to be Wiltshire champions in January.

Team: **Rose Zammit; Eden Minty; Gemma Tucker; Sasha Minnis; Holly McGowan; Gabriela Wnuk; Eryn Russell; Abigail Wilson.**

West Wilts Netball Tournament

Year 9 girls managed to get through to the semi finals but sadly lost out to a very consistent St Laurence team, placing us in 3rd place in a 12 team tournament. Both the A and B team approached the tournament with great determination and team spirit. The B team worked hard and showed a great deal of resilience to earn their 7th place overall.

Year 10 girls had a very cold evening to contend with when they went to Kingdown School for the School Games netball tournament. They came across a very strong team in the first round, which helped to motivate them to victory in the rest of their games. Due to their points score they went through to the semi finals, sadly losing that match by a very small margin. They then faced Stonar in a 3rd/4th place off match they won 1-0.

Year 7 girls travelled to Melksham Oak School to take part in a netball festival with the aim of giving the girls a chance to take part in a friendly tournament. The emphasis was on taking part and gaining experience in preparation for their netball season in term 3 and 4. It was a lovely opportunity to see the

girls playing so well in teams and meeting new friends from other teaching groups.

Sixth Form Sleep Out

The Sixth Form Sleep Out took place on the 8th December 2017. Thirty students and staff had a talk from Lisa Lewis, Chief Executive of Doorway, a homelessness charity based in Chippenham, before bedding down from 10pm until 6am on the school site on one of the coldest nights of the year. Our students were sponsored for their participation. We are still collecting the sponsorship money, but extra congratulations to **Joseph De Jaeger** who managed to raise over £170 himself. Congratulations to all who took part.



West Wilts Badminton at Centre Parcs

The tournament saw teams from all of the West Wilts schools come together and battle it out to qualify for the next round of this competition. St Augustine's was well represented in all age groups and managed to finish with two teams qualifying; our Key Stage 3 Girls team and Key Stage 4 Boys team. Very well done to them!

Year 7 Advent Service

Year 7 have recently focused on Advent within their RE classes by preparing for their Advent Liturgies, a celebration that was carried out with families on the 5th and 6th December. This, over recent years, has become a tradition at St Augustine's and this year's services lived up to the joyful occasions experienced by our students in years gone by. Within classes students looked at the Jesse Tree and how this helps us to understand the anticipation of the coming of the Messiah felt by the Jewish people whose story is told throughout the Old Testament.

Each class took certain key figures from the Old Testament and prepared readings linked to their stories and decorations for the Jesse tree. It was wonderful to see the Year 7s leading their families in preparing themselves for Christmas and this event also provided parents of Year 7 students with the opportunity to meet each other and some of the RE teachers from St Augustine's.

Food Bank Contributions

In this final week of term we are in the week following Gaudete Sunday. With the pink candle on the college Advent wreath now lit, we begin to feel the joy of the anticipation of Christ's coming at Christmas. There is certainly a sense of joy throughout our community as the term draws to a close and we prepare to

spend Christmas with family and friends. At the same time our students are being reminded through their assemblies this week that Christmas is not just a season of 'receiving' joy. It is also a time when we need to look onto the world with eyes that recognise where joy is lacking so we can bring joy to those in need. Our students have done just this through their outstanding contributions to the food bank which clearly indicates how they have been outward looking and responding to the needs of others within the wider local community.

Trip to Italy

During the October half term, Year 11 GCSE geography students, along with **Mrs Ewings, Mrs Portlock** and **Mr Barker**, took part in an education tour to Italy, exploring the area around the Bay of Naples. The party stayed in the outskirts of Sorrento in a hotel with views across the bay, which were amazing when the fog finally cleared on the last day. The students climbed to the summit of Mount Vesuvius to find out about its eruptions and to learn about the risk it poses to the people living in the city of Naples. Later in the trip students also got to visit the towns of Pompeii and Herculaneum and see for themselves the devastating effects the 79 AD eruption of this mountain had on them. It was particularly poignant to see the skeleton and moulds of the bodies frozen in the positions in which they died. We had a boat trip over to the beautiful island of Capri, taking a chairlift to the top to see the amazing views. During the tour, students also had the opportunity to sample produce on an organic farm, and make and eat their own pizzas. They also learnt about the processes involved in the production of olive oil. The great weather was a refreshing change from England, and there were many opportunities to sample the local cuisine and of course, the delicious ice cream – I think the record was three in one day!

As we move into 2018 we are hopeful of more interest in our bird boxes outside the Print Department. We moved the boxes lower this year in the hope that it would entice more guests and almost immediately we gained a night lodger (blue tit) in Box #1. We have our birdwatch page running and we will update as things progress. There is a new video, at high speed, showing how much the birds fluff up for insulation in this cold weather in the Curriculum/Extra Curricular/Bird-Watch folder. <http://www.st-augustines.wilts.sch.uk/bird-watch/>

500 Club Winners

November

1st £50 – Mrs R Carroll
2nd £25 – Mr S Routledge
3rd £25 – Mrs L Lewis

December

1st £50 – Mrs S Westley
2nd £25 – Mrs D Lock
3rd £25 – Mr M Marballie

Christmas Draw

1st £100 – Mrs S Charleton
2nd £50 – Mr A Briddon
3rd £25 – Mr D Dignum
4th £25 – Mr C Stainer

Message from The Chair of Governors

The governors were surprised to receive notice from **Mr Alsop**, explaining that he would be leaving the College in the summer to take up his new post in Hong Kong.

We would like to thank him for the many years of service that he has given to the College, including eight very successful years as Head Teacher.

He has our best wishes for his future and for his exciting new adventure.

The governors have now begun the process to recruit a new Head Teacher.

They are searching for our fifth leader, someone with Faith and Vision who will understand and build upon the very special qualities of St Augustine's.

The post has been advertised in the Catholic and the educational press and on the internet. Hopefully there will be some very good candidates applying and we will then be able to hold interviews in February.

Your prayers for the College at this time are very important. Please ask the Lord to guide us, to help us to choose the right person to lead and to care for the pupils and staff of the College.

The governors and I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very happy Christmas and a peaceful 2018.

Thank you for your continued support of the College.

Mary Keates

Chair of Governors.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

2018

January

4th Teacher Development Day
5th Teacher Development Day
8th **Start of Term 3**
9th Year 9 Retreats
Year 13 Mock Examinations
15th Year 11 Reports issued this week
16th Year 12 Op Art Study Session
17th Sixth Form Young Leaders – CAFOD Training
18th Year 9 Parents Evening
19th London Art Galleries
25th Year 11 Parents Evening

February

2nd Barcelona Art Trip
7th Year 12 Economics
Primary School High 5 Netball Festival
8th Year 11 Taster Day
Year 7 Parents' Evening
9th Spanish Trip
End of Term 3
10th Things I Know To Be True - Live Performance
12th Dublin
17th D of E Silver Award
19th **Start of Term 4**
Year 13 Reports issued this week
Chinese students visiting
20th-23rd Young Musician Auditions

N.B.: All older newsletters can be found at:
<http://sta.cc/newsletters>