

## Festive Fridays

Today saw the first of our festive Friday's where staff and students donned their Christmas jumpers. Each festive Friday we are collecting for a different charity and this week our charity was St Nicholas Hospice in Bury St Edmunds, the hospice is an amazing and supportive place and we know that the charity is dear to many people's heart's.

<https://stnicholashospice.org.uk/>

The year 10 students from 10A held a cake sale where they raised £212. Our overall total for the day so far is £690.



A big thank you to everyone for your support.

Next week we are collecting for the Catholic Children's Society and we will be wearing our pyjamas. !!!!

because  
you matter

St Nicholas  
Hospice Care

## Christmas

### Card Competition - Winning talents

The winner of our Christmas Card competition this year is Nadia Kroszkiewicz from year 7, Monte Casino House for her beautiful cut out collage angel design. Well done Nadia, your work is being produced as our official card for the school.



Congratulations to all those runners up below who entered an array of colourful submissions to the competition, You have all earned commendations and a Christmas prize. Thank you for inspiring the judges with your thoughtful designs.

Gui Santos, Jakub Mrozick, Rebecca Bagatui, Lorenzo Martinez, Krzysztof Liwak, Aubrey Hayes, Neha Jose, Marcel Wiewiova, Lucia Harding, Harrison Beeton, Genevieve Dobson, Jack Walsh, Daisy Martineau, Aly Smith, George Wightman, Elizabeth Nicholls, Phillippe De Mello



Ms  
Chacksfield



This term, every student in the school studying Computer Science was given the opportunity to take part in an international problem-solving competition.

We had a total of 482 students take part and everyone should be extremely proud of themselves for the effort, resilience and amazing teamwork they showed.

The results have been released this week and sent to tutors to show during registration times.

The students below achieved the highest scores in their categories:

Kits – Matilda Cervi (59)

Castors – Szymon Lazinski (66)

Year 7 – Hannah Thomas (172)

Year 8 – Sean Dersley (166)

Year 9 – Naomhan Walker (184)

Year 10 – Adam O'Flynn (200)

Year 11 – Henry Baldock (179)

Year 12 – Isaac Pernot (171)

Year 13 – Ben Green and Rhian Li (123)

A large number of students also achieved their Gold certificates, meaning they were placed in the top 10% of students in their age category across the UK!

These students will have the opportunity to take part in the Oxford Computing Challenge in January, a very prestigious invitation and students should be incredibly proud of their accomplishment.

Year 7

Hannah Thomas, Eliza Rowley, Isobelle Nutt, Jacob Gurrell, Lewis Marriott, Leja Lukoseviciute, Kitty Cooper, Imogen Grove, Annabel Mansfield, Amelia Tsang

Year 8

Sean Dersley, Vanessa Jonczyk, Edward Docking, Michael Knight, Ellen Beckwith, Serena Bergin, Daniel Walkowski, Camar Jogee

Year 9

Naomhan Walker, Isaac Spiller, Charlotte Budd, Ewan Baranskij, Joseph Ferdinand, Mateusz Nasilowski, Finnian Senior, Zuzanna Munteanu, Eva Torfin, Arturs Cirulis, Phoebe Moran, Benjamin Warner, Helena Bulacz, Rosie Pullen, Laura Daly-Serrano, Erin Tattersall

Year 10

Adam O'Flynn, Asir Isswiasi, Toby Steggles, Amy John, Jack Nice

Year 11

Henry Baldock, Raphe Spiller, James Miller, Taylor Valach

Year 12

Isaac Pernot

A huge well done to everyone who took part and we'll run the competition again the same time next year!

Miss Woodruff

## English Speaking Union

Having had an exceptionally busy term already, with his political career as an elected member of the Youth Parliament, and his preparations for next month's appearance as a prosecution barrister in our Bar Mock Trial team, Will Blewitt has also been working hard to ready his speech for the English Speaking Union's Sixth Form public speaking competition.

He won through the initial round and semi-final to the final on 30th November. His speech, on what Labour must do if they are to win the next general election, was delivered with great assurance, humour and profound knowledge. It seemed perhaps, however, that the final panel of judges preferred "softer" topics.

On behalf of St Benedict's and myself I should like to thank and congratulate Will and all of those students who have given up their time and "screwed their courage to the sticking place" to represent us in these contests, which can be quite nerve-racking and are certainly demanding.

Next term we look forward to participating once again in the national Bar Mock Trial Competition at Ipswich Crown Court, with a fifteen-strong team of students from key stages 4 and 5. More of that in future newsletters.

Mrs V James

## Carol Concert

The carol concert will be held at St Edmunds Church, Westgate Street, Bury St Edmunds IP33 1QG  
Wednesday 14 December 7.00pm.

## Transform for Advent

For young people age 16-30 years. Grow in your faith as we approach Christmas! Clare Priory, 9th–11th December.

The weekend includes live music, powerful talks, passionate prayer and interactive workshops, good food and free time! Organised by the Diocesan Youth Service and Clare Priory.

Bookings close on Sunday 4 December. See <https://transformfestival.uk/> for more information.

## Christmas Lunch

We will be having Christmas Lunch on Thursday 15 December, the cost will be £3.00 for Turkey and all the trimmings a vegetarian option will also be available. There will be a limit of 150 so please book early. This will be added to parentpay in the next few days. If your child is eligible for FSM and you would like them to have the lunch please let us know asap. We will not be serving any other food on this day apart from sandwiches.

## Alumni Career Profile

For this week's alumni career profile we look at Julian Bruton, who is a Theatre Director. Julian will be returning to St Benedict's on the 16<sup>th</sup> of January to talk to students interesting in the performing arts about his career journey.



**Year of leaving:**  
2009

**Higher Education Subject and University:**  
BA(Hons) Drama and Theatre Practice, University of Hull.

### Brief Career History:

When leaving St Benedict's, I knew I wanted to continue to be a part of the performing arts, so I committed all my focus into that and took up a BTEC National Diploma in Performing Arts at Cambridge Regional College, instead of taking A Levels. Subsequently I got a place at the University of Hull on the Drama and Theatre Practice degree programme, which gave me the opportunity not just to study drama academically but to receive practical training in theatre – much like going to medical school. It was during my degree I discovered my ability and appetite to direct and it is where I directed my first full-length productions.

Since graduating, I have continued to direct across a variety of different theatres, predominately in London. A true highlight was to direct at the Theatre Royal Haymarket in the heart of London's West End. More recently, I have been selected as one of 6 directors from across the country for The 24 Hour Plays UK at the Lawrence Batley Theatre, Huddersfield

### What do you love about your job:

There are many things I love about my job. Storytelling is the job and who doesn't like a good story? I love how directing and theatre-making is a truly collaborative team-effort. I love how you get to work alongside with incredibly skilled, talented, passionate, and often nice people such as designers, technicians, and actors. Above all the performing arts sector is fuelled by passionate people. We unapologetically love what we do, and we utterly believe in the art form and what it can do for everyone. What more could you want in a job?

### What three pieces of advice would you give someone thinking of a career in Theatre/Directing:

**1) See as much theatre as possible (live screenings/streamings do count!) and read as many scripts as you can (if you're interested in text-based theatre).** That is partly how you learn, and it is where you reaffirm your passion, knowledge, and taste for live storytelling. Theatre does not have to be expensive. I believe that is somewhat of a misconception. There are many fantastic discounts for those under 25, including FREE ticket giveaways.

### 2) Get involved

**with as much theatre as you can.** Join your local drama group/youth theatre group – perform and seek out the opportunity to try other roles like lighting, set design/construction, costume, sound, stage management. Drama is based on action (doing, not saying). You learn and develop your career in theatre the most when on the job. You learn how to get most out of your team and make the best shows possible, when knowing what all the other jobs are and how they function to make a show. The Theatre Royal Bury St Edmunds is fantastic place to start!

**3) Keep going!** The performing arts is truly a long game, and you will be rejected more gigs than being accepted for gigs – that is very much the norm for everyone, regardless of how successful or famous you are. There is no such thing as an overnight success, it does take time. Be patient – life's a journey, so enjoy the ride!

### Three words to sum up an average working day:

Fun, Challenging, Variable

### How did St Benedict's help you into your current role:

Thankfully St Benedict's very much appreciated the arts and often had plenty of extra-curricular activity including the choirs, plays, theatre visits, etc. Those experiences were key in developing my insight, aptitude, and passion for the performing arts. St Benedict's also facilitated GCSE Drama as an option, which served as a good introduction to studying drama. This also included visiting theatres and watching excellent shows. Above all the school and its faculty were nothing but encouraging in my pursuit of the performing arts as a career. If it wasn't for that I'm not sure if I would have continued that journey. You need your allies, the people who champion and advocate for you – to cheer you along the marathon.

### Favourite memory from your time at St Benedict's

So many to pick from! A true highlight every year was the big fundraising week that the school ran before the Easter holidays. It was brilliant time when the school truly came together, raised money for good causes and had fun whilst doing it! The big show-stopping events were the talent show and quiz show. They were very enjoyable and a big laugh, as well as being a brilliant reminder of the talent and skills present in the school. I believe some clips of them are still available on YouTube.

## Celebrating the success of our former students:

Huge congratulations from all of us at St Benedict's to Oliver Moore who has successfully defended his PhD thesis at his viva voce and assumes the title Dr Oliver Moore, PhD.

Also congratulations to Luca Neroni and Lauren Cullivan, who have both successfully passed their Masters degrees, with distinction:

Luca Neroni - MSc Fintech and Fin Markets,

Lauren Cullivan- MSc Environmental Modelling  
Mr Steward



## Sporting Highlights

### Cross Country

Suffolk Schools Cross Country B Race Ipswich High School  
On a mist shrouded November morning runners from schools across the width and breadth of Suffolk drove up the autumnal-leafed tree lined drive of Ipswich High School to converge in front of the imposing façade of the beautifully proportioned Palladian Woolverstone Hall, which was built for William Berners, who owned Berners Street in London, in 1776.

Only the finest runners in the county, who finished in the top fifty places at the A race at the Royal Hospital School in October, were invited to the Suffolk Schools B Race; and all were hoping to finish in the top fifty again to progress through to the next round at Woodbridge School in January. First to toe the starting line were the Minor Girls. The 2300m race was won in 9.13, with Lucy Murphy first home for St Benedict's in 10.39. Going into the home straight Lucy and Alanna Evans were neck and neck, but unfortunately Alanna pushed herself so hard that she felt ill and was forced to stop. Despite this, she showed great resilience to carry on and still managed to finish in an excellent 68th position. Imogen Grove also ran very strongly to finish in 49th position and was pleased to secure her progress to the next round at Woodbridge School.

Fifteen minutes later it was the Minor Boys turn to head off on the opening loop of the school playing fields before heading off past the church and round the big loop around the rugby pitches (2900m). Noah Wilkinson probably had the best race of the day to improve upon his 11th placing in the North/West of the county at the Royal Hospital School to finish in 5th position in a time of 10.13, just 35 seconds behind the winner. This was an amazing achievement, especially as the top twenty places in each race are generally filled by experienced runner. Oliver Lamas, who has recently joined St Edmund's Pacers, also ran superbly to finish in 24th position (10.46). Both Aiden Cameron 57th and Rupert Stafford 69th showed great grit and determination to close four runners in this competitive race, only narrowly missing the top fifty cut off.

St Benedict's students also packed well in the Junior Girls race (2900m) with Molly Murphy heading the team home in 21st position in a time of 10.59 (1m 20 behind the winner). A great race ensued behind her which eventually resulted in Emma Payne finishing in 36th (11.23) just three seconds in front of Eleanor Slater (11.26) and eight seconds in front of Ciara Evans (11.31). Violette Davy made her third consecutive appearance at this race to finish in a very creditable 60th position. Never before have we had five runners from the school close in such competitive positions. Although five St Benedict's runners qualified for the Junior Boys race, on the day only three were able to run due to other commitments. A broken hand sustained playing football the week before couldn't deter Charlie Oxborrow from racing and finishing in our highest position of the day in 4th place, just 30 seconds behind the winner, one of his teammates from St Edmund Pacers. On the first lap, Paddy Matthews was not far behind, but having given it everything was forced to retire on this occasion, despite the fact that he wanted to carry on!

No doubt, given his irrepressible spirit, he will be back again next year to represent the school and progress through to the next round. Charlie Wightman also ran a fine race to finish in 52nd position in his first year in this age group, gaining great experience for his return next year.

Our final race of the day was in the Inter Boys. Although five St Benedict's students qualified, once again other sporting commitments reduced our entry on the day. However, both Kuba Kluczynski (34th) and Taylor Valach (43rd) should be very proud of themselves as they both ran superbly to complete the 5000m course and secure their passage through to the next round. Our seasoned cross-country veteran, Phoebe Harpur-Davies, who has represented Suffolk on numerous occasions was unable to run in the Inter Girls race this year, but it was great to see her younger sister Beatrice, who will hopefully join St Benedict's in 2023, take up the mantle and finish in 60th position in the Minor Girls race.

All in all, it was really enjoyable day, with all of our runners being a credit to themselves, their families and the school. They all tried their hardest and it was lovely to see them cheering each other on and demonstrating the school's core values of Wisdom, Compassion and above all Resilience.

Mr Murphy

### Sports Leaders Conference

On Thursday the 1st of December, ten year 10 students were invited to take part in the sports leadership conference at King Edwards school. The focus of this event was for students to experience 'how to run a tournament' for football, tag rugby, and handball. Included in each of these sessions were how to run a warm-up, organisation of activities, scoring, health & safety and refereeing. All leaders were fantastic and were confident leading each activity. Students will continue to help lead events throughout the year, including the upcoming inter-house dodgeball tournament in the spring term!

Mr Bates

### Year 7 Netball vs Westley- WIN!

Our year 7 girls netball team beat Westley 2-1 with some brilliant play from all involved. It was a cold evening to play and the girls worked really hard throughout to get the ball into our shooting D many times. Player of the match chosen by the Westley team was awarded to Lily Smith and our players player was awarded to Amelia Smith. Well done! We have two more games coming up, Stowmarket and Thurston.

Mrs Wright

### Congratulations

Many congratulations to Edison Lorejo in Year 9 who came 1st in the West Suffolk Swimming Club Under-14 Skins competition last weekend. The notoriously challenging knock-out competition requires swimming a full series of 50m races using randomly selected strokes.

## Parliament Trip Monday

After the long last weekend in November, twenty four Year 12 and 13 students met at 0545hrs at the school to board a bus for a day trip to London.

Our first stop was the Houses of Parliament where we watched an immersive video experience called 'The Story of Parliament'. At the end of the film we were greeted by Bury St Edmunds MP Jo Churchill's parliamentary assistant who apologised for the fact that she couldn't meet us personally (because she had business at 10 Downing Street) but gave a very lively and informative talk about his role and held a question and answer session.

This was followed by a tour of the Houses of Parliament from our guides Laurel and Will. The tour began under the Victoria tower, where the monarch's horse drawn carriage arrives for the State Opening of Parliament, and then up the steps marked by the spurs of the guards from the Household Cavalry into the King's Robing Room. We then continued into the Royal Gallery and into the sumptuously decorated House of Lords.



From there we processed into the Central Lobby where our guides asked us to look out for the dent made in the door by Black Rod as we entered the House of Commons. Having walked through one of the division lobbies, poignantly we stood near the plaque to Jo Cox as our guide pointed out the plaques on the walls of MPs who had died while being elected representatives, mainly from the First World War. The highlight of our visit was when our guide invited a small selection of students to stand at the despatch boxes and hold impromptu debates. The students were thrilled to stand in the exact same places as Rishi Sunak and Keir Starmer; and where Will Blewitt had stood when delivering a speech to the UK Youth Parliament just a couple of weeks before.

Having whetted the appetites of several students for future parliamentary careers, we then walked back through the Central Lobby into St Stephen's Hall (the previous House of Commons) and on into Westminster Hall where the students were able to see the plaques where Charles I sat during his trial, along with ones showing where several heads of state have addressed parliament and some bright new plaques marking the position where Queen Elizabeth I lay in state.

To make the most of our visit to London we then crossed Parliament Square for a self-guided tour of the Supreme Court, where the justices had ruled, only last week, that

Nicola Sturgeon

couldn't hold a second independence referendum as the Constitution was a reserved matter for parliament to decide upon. The students visited all three court rooms and were able to sit in the seats of the justices and even had the opportunity to act out putting one of the group on trial for tax evasion!

From there, we headed up Whitehall, past 10 Downing Street, where a small protest was taking place about pensions, and by good fortune arrived at Horse Guards just in time to see the changing of the guard. We then paused a bit further on to look at the Banqueting House, which was built by James I and improved by Charles I, including the ceiling painting of the Apotheosis of James I by Paul Reubens; which would have been the last piece of art that

Charles I saw before walking out of one of the upstairs windows to a specially erected scaffold where he was executed in 1649.



Just a short walk away we again paused at the equestrian statue of Charles I which was commissioned by the Lord Treasurer Richard Weston for his garden in Roehampton before it was hidden away during the interregnum and displayed again on the position of the last of the Eleanor Crosses on a plinth designed by Sir Christopher Wren after the restoration of the monarchy. The students then enjoyed a bit of free time in the area around Trafalgar Square, freshly adorned with the Christmas tree gifted annually by Norway, before being able to spend the best part of two hours in the National Gallery, where they were able to see more works associated with politics such as the Rokeby Venus which was attacked by a Suffragette and Vincent Van Gogh's sunflowers which were the recent victim of a climate protest.

It was a fantastic day out and we were exceptionally proud of the way our students conducted themselves and embraced the opportunity to acquire cultural capital.

Mr Murphy