

We have made it to the end of a very long and very busy term! Our students and staff have been wonderful and I am so grateful to everyone who makes this community so special. As we approach Christmas together I am conscious of all those both outside and inside our communities for whom Christmas is a difficult time particularly thinking of those who are struggling due to the cost of living crisis, those grieving the loss of loved ones and those impacted by the war in Ukraine. We pray for peace and that all those who need help are comforted and cared for.

I would like to wish all our families a peaceful, joyful and merry Christmas and we look forward to greeting 2023 with optimism and hope.

*Yours in Christ, Imogen Senior*

## Bishop Peter

It's with great joy in our hearts that we welcome Bishop Peter to our Diocese, as our new Bishop to shepherd us as Bishop Alan retires to a more quiet life.

We took 12 people to the Bishops Ordination and Installation Mass, it was an epic event in every sense, every sign and symbol that makes Catholic prayer rich was there in great abundance, and, for those with a good view, it was an event packed with inspiring moments, and so despite being 3 hours and freezing cold, the time flew, and it had a great impact. Thank you to all at the diocese who must have put so much effort into creating such a fantastic event.

We look forward to being led by Bishop Peter for many years to come.

May God bless him in all he does in this new role

*Matt Spiller*



## Reverse Advent Calendar

I just want to say a massive thank you to all those who took part in the reverse advent calendar this year, we gathered more than we've ever gathered before, last year we donated 40 crates and some bagfuls, this year we were able to collect just less than 60 crates of food, which students and staff volunteered to organise here in school, it's a great privilege to work with such kindness, and we pray that those who will be receiving these gifts will know the love and care we have given these donations with, we pray that their Christmas would be filled with joy and they would have all their needs met. Thank you so much

*Matt*



## Computer Science—Takes you to the Stars

Well, metaphorically anyway. On Wednesday 7th December the Computer Science department, took a group of GCSE and 6th Form students to BT's Adastral Park at Martlesham Heath, Ipswich. Adastral Park is an exciting cluster of high-tech telecommunication and technology companies. It has become the heart of the UK's digital ecosystem. It combines a national operation centre, test facilities and a global R&D unit, all set amongst a thriving community of collaborative technological innovation. The park is home to BT's innovation labs and Innovation Martlesham (an established and growing cluster of circa 150 high-tech ICT companies) as well as educational initiatives such as the Tommy Flowers Network and it was BT who were our hosts for the day in their special ChristEMas Event.



Our students were treated to a full day experience of lectures, demonstrations, tours and hands-on activities. Professor Joe Finney from Lancaster University gave an inspiring talk about his involvement in the development of the educational micro:bit technology with the BBC and other partners. He gave this as an example of how the principles of Collaboration, Creativity, Empowerment can enable our students to go on and "change the world" – why not?

We were taken on a tour of BT's showcase facility that featured a number of technology demonstrations across industry-themed devices and software, designed to inspire, surprise and challenge our students to think creatively outside the formal, classroom structure. The showcases included how technology and computer science can make significant contributions to medical technology; in the home; defence and cybersecurity; security in the home; and how robotic devices can be used to our advantage in a number of areas.



A popular feature of the day was a chance to visit a number of different stands in the Expo Area. Many of the stands gave the students a chance to see all the exciting new technologies that are being developed at Adastral Park, especially in the area of Virtual Reality. To many of us VR is

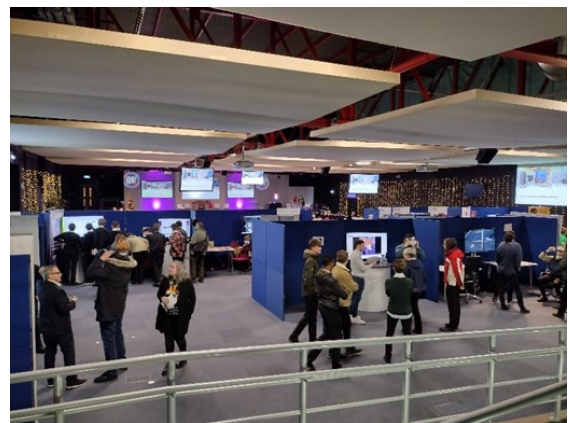
something of a plaything, but its use has huge possibilities in future science and technology.

To round off the day the students were asked to join a festive computer science encryption challenge. They learned about some of the different ciphers for GCSE and A level computer science and to understand how encryption/decryption processes work and how they can be made more secure.

Most importantly, our students were able to speak one-on-one with a variety of young BT apprentices who are involved in developing and expanding new technologies at BT in collaboration with BT's numerous partners. The BT Group Apprenticeship scheme is a chance for our students, should they choose this path, to become all they can be – personally as well as professionally – as they shape the technology that will make all our everyday lives run smoothly.

(PS The name "Adastral" come from the Latin "Ad Astra", meaning "to the stars". It is poignantly appropriate - the modern-day Adastral Park is on the site of the WW2 airfield that was RAF Martlesham Heath. The motto of the RAF to this day is "Per Ardua Ad Astra" - through adversity to the stars)

A huge thank you to the students who attended for their excellent behaviour and attitude throughout the event, they represented the school incredibly well. Another to Mr Gregory for being our chauffeur, an excellent source of technological knowledge for the students and the author of this report.



Miss Woodruff



## Radio Maria

We had a fantastic opportunity to lead the listeners of Radio Maria in their advent preparation on Monday this week, there was some fantastic content that the students took great effort to design, with interviews with students about Christmas experiences from around the world to a Christmas Quiz! One of the highlights for me was the two poems which were written especially for the show and were performed live by their author.

### A Poem By Amy John Year 10

one serene night millennia ago.  
one blazing star, a beacon of light.  
one gentle woman, head held low  
and one earthly child with a soul of white.

it is a reticent, tranquil dusk  
when the defiled world shatters.  
the devil is a wilted, withered husk  
on this night, when a baby's cries scatter.

the sky implodes with force of the divine  
as a map is etched in the stars.  
a celestial light, searing in its design  
leads regal foreigners, bearing precious jars.

a woman of love, an unblemished soul.  
her countenance holds the legacy of lords.  
with the grace of a queen, she accepts her role  
despite her destiny, a heart pierced by swords.

she cradles her child, a dear, sweet embrace  
and holds him close, the sacrificial lamb.  
she knows the anguish her son will face  
as a mother's greatest pain is her child damned.

a newborn wails as time splits apart  
his eyes hold the promise of salvation.  
my son, an omniscient voice imparts  
the one whose death redeems nations.

and so here's to the night that wrote history  
and to the fiery star, divine light befalls  
to the mother who cradled the great mystery  
and to the sacred child that saved us all.

### Year 11 Into 6th Form

Last week saw our Year 11 into sixth form week where the Y11 students were able to sit in on some actual Year 12 and 13 lessons, which gave them a great insight into what the subjects are like at A-level.

Reminder to all Year 11s -

It's not too late to submit your application to the sixth form, applications can be made through the school's website, go to the sixth form tab and complete the form.

Did you know that St Benedict's has once again been named top performing state school in Suffolk by the Sunday Times Good School Guide!

Merry Christmas from the Sixth Form Team

## Seeking Jesus

Mistletoe hanging in great big bunches  
Wreaths on every door  
Fairy lights dangling from every roof  
And trees seen on every window

While all this is nice and all  
There is only one thing I need  
YOU! You make me laugh and smile and cry  
You make me feel happy and full inside  
You make me glow up like fairy lights

The reason Christmas is so special  
Is I get to feel you in people around me  
As I search every nook and cranny to see  
you Wondering if you have decided to spend Christmas  
with God this year I chuckle and chortle

No wonder I cannot see you but just feel you  
As you are in our hearts  
Jesus you are always with us in our hearts

Joyfully, I walk with a bounce in my step  
As I made my discovery I cannot wait for tomorrow  
To say Happy Birthday to you dear Jesus

By Alexis Rose Josy Year 7

## Year 11 Bowling

On Thursday 15th December the Year 11s enjoyed their annual post-mock trip to Bury Bowl. It was great to see the students enjoying themselves after all their hard work during their mocks.

Mrs Slater



## Staying Safe

We truly hope you have a relaxing and safe Christmas. If at any time you are concerned about how yourself or others are coping, you can speak to Suffolk social services at customer first on 08088004005 or Norfolk social services on 03448008020.

## Cosmology and Galileo Come to St Benedict's

At last the school's Astronomy Group managed to organise an 'open evening' where students, parents and staff were invited to an evening of stargazing and more. This particular event was special in that, thanks to Mr Steward our Head of Careers, we were able to have a VIP guest speaker – Dr Matt Bothwell, who is the Public Astronomer at the Institute of Astronomy at the University of Cambridge. Dr Bothwell is a professional cosmologist, so he is concerned with finding an answer to the fundamental question of "Life, the Universe and Everything". Although he did not come up with the answer "42", he certainly gave us an insight into our search for planets orbiting distant stars in our Milky Way galaxy and the intriguing possibility that there may be Earth-like planets out there (Earth v2.0) that may harbour life.

The observational theme of the evening was to see the giant gas planet Jupiter using our splendid telescope, the 12" Langley-Newtonian reflector. Indeed, we were happy to welcome another VIP guest in Mr Derek Langley himself after whom our telescope is named – Mr Langley and the generosity of the Vinten Trust have given us this valuable astronomical telescope as an educational resource.

It is notable that this Astronomy Evening was the most well attended since the modest beginnings of our Group back in 2017, with an audience of more than 70 students, parents and staff – fortunately we had the use of the Drama Studio, but it was almost a case of 'standing room only'. It must be emphasised that our events are not just for staff and students, but for their families too, so we were delighted to welcome them all. We even had our caretaker's mother-in-law turn up, whom we warmly welcomed!

Another notable aspect was the number of our younger students from years 7 and 8 who came along. This is certainly the result of an initiative by our Reading and Literacy Champion, Mr Walker, who organized a special presentation of the school's Astronomy Group in the LRC a few weeks ago.

Where does Galileo come into our evening? In 1608 he acquired what was then a new invention, a telescope. He decided to turn it to the night sky and observed the Moon and the planets. He saw, for the first time in human history, the four major moons of Jupiter – Callisto, Europa, Ganymede and Io – which led to him confirming the theory of Copernicus, some years earlier, that the Sun, not the Earth, was at the centre of our Solar System. A monumental event in the history of science, not just astronomy.

With the clarity of the images of Jupiter and its Galilean moons as seen through our telescope, our young astronomers were able to see images exactly as they would have been observed by Galileo himself over 400 years ago. Should any of them choose a career path in Science and Astronomy, who knows what future wonders in the Universe they may themselves discover.

By the way, it was absolutely freezing out on the field with the telescope, but we had to be grateful for a beautiful clear winter sky, the very best for star and planet gazing. We give huge thanks to all who attended and braved the deep freeze. Next event is for February/March, all will be welcome again – the theme then will be the great constellation of Orion and the Orion Nebula.

## St Benedict's Rubik's Cube Competition Results.



This term we held a Rubik's cube speed competition across all year groups. We had several competitors and they all could solve the Rubik's cube in amazing times. The results table and times are listed below.

Position	Name	Year Group	Fastest Time
1st	Ben Green	Year 13	00:12
2nd	Mario Maala	Year 10	00:32
	Oliver Iamas Nakagawa	Year 7	00:47
3rd	Isaac Spiller	Year 9	00:47
3rd	Joseph Ferdinand	Year 9	00:47
4th	Joel Morgan	Year 7	00:49
5th	Noa Taylor	Year 8	00:57
6th	Thomas Roy	Year 13	00:59
7th	George Wightman	Year 8	01:02
8th	Ethan McCleary	Year 7	01:03
9th	Michael Knight	Year 8	01:05
10th	Landon Hydes	Year 8	01:12
11th	Mohamed Ismail	Year 10	01:16
11th	Emil Cheriyan	Year 13	01:16
12th	William Herlihy	Year 7	01:17
13th	Sean Roberts	Year 7	01:30
14th	Asir Isswiasi	Year 10	02:00
15th	Wiktor Konopca	Year 7	02:30

Ben Green was our school winner and was able to solve a 3x3 Rubik's cube in 12 seconds! His personal best is 8 seconds, he can solve it one handed in 22 seconds, and solved a 4x4 cube in 52 seconds. Amazing results.

A big thank you to all competitors and to the students that helped to run the heats.

Rubik's cube club will continue next term, all students welcome.

Mrs Eastwood

## Term Dates

### Spring Term

Tuesday 3 January 2023

Students Return: Wednesday 4 January 2023

Half Term: Monday 13 February to Friday 17 February 2023

Ends: Friday 31 March 2023

School Holiday: Monday 3 April to Friday 14 April

PD Day(s): Tuesday 3 January and Monday 20 February

### Summer Term

Starts: Monday 17 April 2023

Half Term: Monday 29 May to Friday 2 June 2023

Ends: Friday 21 July 2023