

We welcomed students back this week following what we hoped was an enjoyable half term for you all.

A minutes silence was held in the UK today to mark a year since Russia invaded Ukraine, we ask that you keep the Ukraine community in your prayers.

High School Musical rehearsals are well underway, there has been some marvellous singing coming from the hall and we promise an outstanding performance from our stars next week. There are a limited number of tickets still available please use the links below to book your seat payment is via parentpay.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/st-benedicts-presents-high-school-musical-28th-february-tickets-529341353237>

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/st-benedicts-presents-high-school-musical-1st-march-tickets-533654905187>

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/st-benedicts-presents-high-school-musical-2nd-march-tickets-533663751647>

Have a restful weekend

## Maths Challenges success

Intermediate Maths Challenge (IMC) 2023

The IMC is a 60-minute, multiple-choice competition aimed at high ability Maths students across the UK. It encourages mathematical reasoning, precision of thought, and fluency in using basic mathematical techniques to solve interesting problems.

We are delighted to announce that students at St Benedict's achieved 7 golds, 10 silvers and 5 bronzes in this year's IMC! To recognise the highest performers in the Challenge, UKMT awarded the top-scoring 60% of participants Bronze, Silver and Gold certificates in the ratio 3:2:1. Please see below for those who secured certificates!

**Gold**—Asir Isswiasi, Amy John, Taylor Valach, Phoebe Harpur-Davies, Teodora Bodean, Hannah Wilkinson and Raphe Spiller

**Silver** -Grace Clifton, Ava Denyer-Peach, Henry Baldock, Oscar Martyn, Mateusz Bos, Rafael Martinez, Niya Paul, Finola Thacker, Alice Ellison and William Wells

**Bronze**—Millie Dack, Romilly Findley, Angel Jose, Kuba Kluczynski and Milan Biju

This year, three students got equal top scores and were tied for the best in school, unfortunately they were one point short of being able to go through to the next round, (Pink Kangaroo), this puts Asir Isswiasi, Amy John and Taylor Valach just outside the top 8000 students in the UK. We are so proud of the achievements of all our pupils that took part in the Intermediate Maths Challenge.

Mrs Nicholls

## Choosing to Read

Reading Week 27th February to 3rd March

Advance notice that 27th February to 3rd March will be Reading Week, including World Book Day on Thursday 2nd March. The aim of World Book Day is to promote reading for pleasure and, to support this, students will have lots of opportunities to read throughout the week and experience the benefits that this brings.

Students will receive their £1 book tokens as part of World Book Day's mission to give "every child and young person the opportunity to have a book of their own". There will also be a create a potato book character challenge for tutor groups to compete in, with prizes for the best decorated potato in each year group. On World Book Day itself students will see some of their favourite book characters brought to life in the staff dress-up.

Students will also take part in reading activities in their lessons and the library will host several events, including a Book Swap – so we would encourage students to bring in books from home that they no longer read, which another student might enjoy.

The English Department

## International Student Visit

For the last week of half term we were delighted to host 24 Italian students from the International school in Bury St. Edmunds. The students joined either year 9 or year 10 for the week and were hosted by students from the form groups. They came to all the lessons that our students had and worked extremely well and were exceptionally well behaved.

The week finished with an Italian Speaking club hosted by Mr De Oliveira on Friday lunchtime. Our students joined the Italian students in learning greetings and numbers. It was a fun session and was a real treat to be able to speak with native Italian speakers, even I learnt a few words and some numbers.



Our year 10 students were especially sad to see them go and there were lots of goodbyes at the end of the day. I look forward to us hosting more International students in the future.

Mrs Cornforth

## Ski Trip 2023

It was fantastic to run a ski trip for the first time since the Covid-19 pandemic. On Friday 10th February 47 students and six teachers departed school at 15:00hrs for a 23 hour journey to Zell Am See in Austria.

Thankfully, we had a good journey and managed to board a slightly earlier ferry before settling down for the night on board the coach. In the morning we stopped at a service station in Germany for some breakfast and then reboarded the bus for the last leg. As we travelled through Bavaria we passed the Allianz Arena, home to Bayern Munich, and watched 'Cool Runnings' to get us in the mood for some winter sports action.

At around 14:00hrs we arrived at our home for the week, the Jugendaus (Youth Hostel) which had fantastic views of Zell am See. Having settled into their rooms, we then went to collect our skis, boots and poles from a nearby shop before returning to the hostel for dinner.

The next five days followed a similar pattern of an early morning wake-up call at 07:00hrs, breakfast at 08:00hrs and then meeting up with our ski instructors at 09:30hrs for five hours of ski lessons punctuated by a warm lunch in one of the restaurants at the top of the mountains.

We had a wide range of abilities on the trip and had expert tuition from the instructors from Ski Dome Skischule. Carl took the advanced skiers, accompanied by Mr Stafford and Ms Mak; Tom took the intermediate group accompanied by Mr Murphy and Bob and Niek took the two beginners groups accompanied by Mr Sousa and Miss Dalby.

For the first three days we took the Gletscherjet gondola lifts to ski in the Kitzsteinhorn area and on the last three days we took the Areitbahn to ski in the Schmittenhohe area. Both areas provided excellent snow conditions and the students were lucky enough to experience good weather every day.

Our après ski events included a pizza evening on the Sunday night at a local village pizzeria which managed to serve nearly sixty fresh pizzas in just a matter of minutes. This was followed by an evening swim on the Monday night at a local hotel pool, where Miss Dalby ran a fantastic funny jumps and dives contest. Mr Sousa's fledgling bird jump was the cause of much hilarity – especially when the first part of his body to surface was his foot which extended out of the water like a periscope! On the Tuesday evening we had a lovely walk along the banks of the lake into the centre of town where the students found some local eateries – pizza and waffles proved very popular!

The following day we went to see the Zell am See Eisbaren (ice hockey club) play another local team. The students really enjoyed cheering on the home team, who entertained us by winning the game 6-2, with the added interest of the odd scuffle between the opposing players. The breaks in the match were also fun as the compere managed to organise a Mexican wave and the whole crowd cheered on the man on the ice resurfer who enjoyed his moment of fame by raising both hands in the air every time he passed the most raucous section of the stadium.

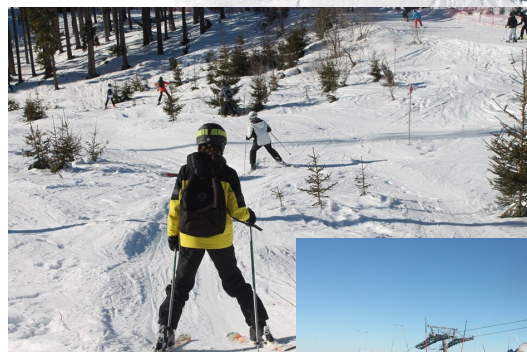
Sadly, the last evening activity was packing before an early night as we had to arise an hour earlier on the last day to fit

in a morning's skiing 24 February 2023 Issue 212  
before handing back our equipment and preparing for the journey home. The week seemed to pass too quickly, especially as all of the students made excellent progress, particularly the beginners groups who managed to move from the nursery slopes to red runs on their first ski holiday.

We also enjoyed a good journey back, with many of the students settling down to watch Eddie the Eagle followed by Transformers the movie. Thankfully, we arrived at Calais in good time and managed, once more, to board an earlier ferry, which enabled us to avoid the long queues which were caused by the Border Guards strike later in the day.

The students were superb ambassadors for the school and were a joy to be with. It really was an excellent trip, but it wouldn't have been possible without the hard work of large number of people. I would personally like to thank Nicola Ellis from the Finance Office for all her hard work in arranging the payments and the teaching staff who gave up their half-terms to help out – Mr Boorman, Miss Dalby, Ms Mak, Mr Sousa and Mr Stafford. I would also like to thank HTS for doing such a superb job of making it possible, Mark Rea and Barney from Snow Union for a first class ski clothing service, our excellent rep, Vanessa, our ski instructors and finally our drivers, Gavin and Thomas, from Your Coach Hire.

It really was wonderful to experience the snow-capped peaks of the Alps and to drink in the mountain air for the first time since 2019. We are now looking forward to returning to Austria for the next ski trip to the Stubai valley in 2024.





## The Travellers Return!

On Thursday Mrs Slater and I were welcomed back from our travels to Cambodia. Having just spent two weeks in a small town in southeast Asia, we returned with seemingly paradoxical stories: Stories of comfort in the face of poverty, a polite and calm culture which creates the craziest drivers, a crumbling infrastructure alongside massive new investment from neighbouring countries, a failed education system for people over 30 and the birth of a new generation of educated aspirational young people. We also saw a new experience of Buddhism and Catholicism living peacefully side by side, in the country as a whole, in the villages we visited and sometimes in the hearts of people we met.

We received a very warm welcome from the team running the parish in Siem Reap. Where we hope to work in future years. The reason for the visit was to ascertain how in the future we could run a trip that would be seen by both our students and the Cambodian students as more beneficial than the monetary value of the trip's costs. It was an eye-opening experience that significantly affected our thoughts about any future visits. Now we've returned home with the simple task of creating a meaningful, safe and ultimately life changing trip for future sixth formers of our school!

If you'd like to catch up with the diary of our visit you can find the complete trip on the school website under News and Events – Latest News, or using this link <https://www.st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk/news/?pid=3&nid=1&storyid=1139>

Matt Spiller

## Rome 2023

29 students and 4 members of staff set off at silly O Clock on the 4th of February for the annual pilgrimage to Rome. It was a full on 5 days of visiting the most amazing places, we were all in awe of the beautiful buildings and history that goes with it. We walked for miles, took part in 2 masses and had the impromptu opportunity of seeing the Pope, not in St Peters Square but in the beautiful Basilica Papale di Santa Maria Maggiore, it was truly a special moment for us all, something we will remember for years to come. A full report from some of the students will be in the next edition, but here are a few photos.

## A Level Adventure to Paris

Over half term we given the option of visiting Paris, as a combined Art, DT and French trip, with school and we cannot express how grateful we are. We visited lots of galleries; including The Louvre, The Musee D'Orsay and The Pompidou Centre, each place was entirely different from the last, allowing us to see such a wide range of art, all of which was significant, cultural, beautiful and educational. Every time we stepped into a museum it was like a new fresh experience, never fully knowing what artwork we would fall in love with next! Aside from the artistic side, we were so lucky to stay in a hotel that was well situated, enabling us to walk to our various destinations along scenic routes, making the journey just as exciting as the experience itself. Mr Richmond, Ms Chacksfield and Miss Stemp organised the trip so perfectly to be catered to our interests as students, giving us the chance to view the city as a school, but also in individual groups. The freedom we were given was so refreshing, as it really pushed us to take initiative and to develop our organisational skills, whilst still having the safety net of our teachers. In our free time we were given the opportunity to experience French cuisine, and found lovely restaurants where we could practice our French, which improved significantly as the trip progressed. This new environment allowed us to form new friendships which are so valuable and we are so thankful for there was truly never a dull moment! We thank the teachers from the bottom of our hearts as the community we went with and the detailed planning really made this trip one to remember forever.

Amelia Tas, Claire Jones and Flora Eggleston Year 12

