



This week we welcomed 34 students from Thailand who have joined our years 7,9 and 10. The students have come via the British Language School, and are with us for 2 weeks. We are very grateful to our students who have been amazing buddies showing them around and taking them under their wings, it is a fabulous experience for them to learn a new culture and great to see new friendships growing. There has been a Thai cooking session going on in DT food today which I am sure was delicious.

We were very happy to welcome Christabel Kiy who joined us on Monday as our new Business Manager, Christabel will be working across 2 schools within the trust us and St Albans.

We hope you all have a good weekend and don't forget to put your clocks forward.

Public Speaking Competition

On Wednesday St Benedict's took part in the annual Rotary Club public speaking competition at County Upper School. I accompanied our hard-working Year 9 team: Harel Samuel, Aidan Feely and Naomhan Walker, supported by their research assistant Joseph Marris to the venue and watched while they presented a passionate critique of the use of solitary confinement in prisons around the world, holding their audience spellbound for a perfect 5 minutes.

Other speeches in the age group discussed the importance of drama and the need for global nuclear disarmament – typically varied fare for this event as the topics are chosen and prepared by the students and then painstakingly rehearsed in the weeks leading up to the competition, but these were probably the best delivered speeches we have seen since Covid-19 forced our local Rotary Club to suspend proceedings.

The sixth form team of Aoife Bowyer, Amelia Tas and Flora Eggleston spoke informatively and entertainingly about the differences between drinking cultures in Britain and France, a fascinating subject apparently suggested by observations made on their recent school visit to Paris.

I'm delighted to report that both teams were presented with certificates and book tokens as runners-up, but it was the opportunity to participate in a contest with other like-minded students and to listen to one another's ideas and assimilate different attitudes and values which was the main reward, making this such a successful and highly enjoyable afternoon, and a fitting end to the long round of public speaking and debating fixtures in which our students have been engaged over this academic year.

Mrs James

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Dodgeball



Wednesday lunchtime saw a sixth form charitable sporting spectacle take place in the gym. The Year 13 prom committee organised a dress-up dodge ball tournament to raise funds for their prom. The sixth form entered five teams which ranged from 'There were five of us in the marriage', to 'Winnie the Pooh'!



The teachers managed to provide some opposition and the younger years paid 50p each to spectate. It turns out the teachers aren't that familiar with the rules of dodgeball so were quickly knocked out. There was some fierce competition and a lot of noise from the spectators, that led to a final, which will be played next Wednesday.

Mrs Slater

World Youth Day

The group will be holding an Easter raffle on Friday the 31st of March for all year groups and teachers with exciting prizes to offer, tickets are on sale now.

Oscar Lyons

End of Term

Next Friday 31 March is the last day of term. Students return on Monday 17 April 2023

Bank Holidays

There are 3 bank holidays in May 1, 8 and 29

Half Term

Monday 29 May to Friday 2 June

Did you know the term dates and a calendar are on our website? You will find them under the about us tab.

Technician News

Technicians are highly skilled, very experienced and essential members of school support staff, particularly in the Science Department and the Faculty of Art & DT. It is notable that at St Benedict's the teachers in those departments regularly express thanks to their support colleagues, both verbally and in the form of various gifts of biscuits and chocolates - all very much appreciated. However, this month the technicians received an external accolade that they can rightly be proud of - thanks to the initiative of Senior Science Technician, Mr M Tanguay.

#TECHOGNITION is a national celebration of technical support staff, recognising the importance of their essential roles in school and college education. It is sponsored by Preproom.org in conjunction with Unison, Technical

Champions, Philip Harris and SLS Select Education. They encouraged technical staff in UK schools and colleges to upload photos of themselves or their colleagues performing any one of the vast and varied jobs they do to their website and to social media - the best would be awarded special prizes. In our case we won top prize and received a large hamper of goodies.

Mr Tanguay provided a photograph of himself wearing a modified set of laboratory safety glasses. Safety gasses are, of course, essential protective equipment for students (and staff) working with potentially hazardous materials in class practical's. However these were a very special "star-spangled set"



clearly impressed the judges, the result being that the Departments of Science, Art & DT received a bumper M&S hamper full of all sorts of goodies. If you think that Mr Tanguay's selfie is frivolous, think again. As a Qualified Teacher of Physics himself, he is demonstrating a fundamental principle of physics and electromagnetism - Fleming's Left-Hand Rule. This describes the relationship between the direction of a magnetic field (forefinger pointing left to right); the direction of an electric current (second finger pointing down); and the subsequent direction of force (thumb pointing towards you). Simple!

Mr Gregory

Girls Rugby



On Tuesday afternoon, 15 girls from years 10 and 11 went to another rugby tournament having won two the previous year. On this day, we had numerous girls playing their first ever rugby match and did so incredibly well! We played two different schools, one of them twice, and won two games of those three. Throughout the whole afternoon, the girls displayed phenomenal team spirit, determination and confidence. During the first game, the opposing teams coach said to me "you've got a great team there! Some really skilled players", and as he said this, we went over for our 6th try of the game! We eventually won that game 39-5. The second game we came up against a team who were, to a player, bigger and stronger but at no point did our girls back down or shirk their responsibilities. The opposing team coach said it was the hardest game they'd played with them having played many more recently than us. For the third game we played the same team as our first match and again, we won convincingly. Overall though, every single player tackled, passed, carried and demonstrated their rugby ability excellently and I couldn't be prouder of them.

Mr Elmer

Alumni Visit

On Monday 23rd March, alumni Stephen Dunne visited St Benedict's to talk to the Year 12 Politics students about his career in the Civil Service.

Following his graduation from Oxford University, Stephen joined the Civil Service Fast Stream and has worked in several departments in Whitehall including the Cabinet Office, the Ministry of Defence, the Department for International Development and is currently working at the Treasury.

The students were enthralled by his presentation about the Civil Service and the various postings he has completed so far, especially by his explanation of one of his more recent assignments to advise on the reduction of foreign aid from 0.7% of gross national income (GNI) to 0.5% which represents a cut of between about £4bn - £5bn depending on the size of the economy. Stephen sensitively outlined the issues surrounding this measure, which helped the students understand the complexities that the Treasury has to deal with.

Stephen also explained the importance of the Civil Service's core values of 'integrity', 'honesty', 'objectivity' and 'impartiality'. He concluded his presentation by saying how much he enjoyed working in such a demanding environment. The students really enjoyed his visit, and he has kindled an interest in several of the class members to find out more about the opportunities within the Civil Service.

Mr Murphy