



St Benedict's Newsletter 277

17 January 2025



Year 12 Chemistry Students' Enrichment Project: Crafting Christmas Scents for Charity

During the autumn term our Year 12 chemistry students undertook a fascinating enrichment project focused on essential oils and fragrance creation. The students learned how essential oils are extracted from natural products such as orange peel, cloves, and lavender using steam distillation. They then explored the art and science of fragrance formulation by combining different essential oils to craft unique scents.

The project extended into producing scented candles. Drawing inspiration from traditional Christmas fragrances, the students experimented with various combinations of cinnamon, orange, chocolate, clove, and cedarwood. After testing and gathering feedback from staff and peers, a winning fragrance was selected.

The chosen scent was used to create batches of candles, which were sold in the lead-up to Christmas. Thanks to the generosity of Tilley Distribution, which donated all raw materials, the project raised over £500. This year the students chose to donate the money to Smile Train, a charity providing free cleft palate surgery to children in over 75 countries.

To learn more about Smile Train's impactful work, visit smiletrain.org.uk

Mr Senior

Careers Talk: Medical Careers



Careers Talk: Medical Careers: Doctors and the wider Multi-disciplinary Team

We launched this term's series of Careers Talks on Thursday 16th January with James Catton's comprehensive and insightful introduction to the relatively new role of the Physician Associate (PA). James has been working as a Physician Associate within the NHS for the past seven years. Alongside his work at Stowhealth GP Surgery, James is a PA Ambassador for Suffolk and Northeast Essex and lectures on the PA course at Anglia Ruskin University (ARU) in Cambridge.

James explained how the gap between the roles of Doctor and Nurse have now been bridged by PAs - a role that originated in the US and in the UK employs healthcare or biomedical graduates who specialise in Physician Associate medical practice through a two-year postgraduate course. PA tasks include taking medical histories from patients, performing physical examinations, diagnostic and therapeutic procedures, diagnosing illnesses, analysing test results and providing health promotion and disease prevention advice for patients. It was whilst James was working on his Master's degree in Molecular Science that he happened across a talk at university about the PA role. Realising he preferred working with people more than lab equipment, his course was diverted to his now more varied role. James supports the work of Doctors and Consultants in hospital and GP practice and also makes home visits to patients - ranging from newborns to the elderly.

Our audience on the day ranged from Year 7 students to those in their final year at St Benedict's. I wonder if their intended medical pathways will now change on the basis of this new information...

Miss Hahn



New PSHE Books

PSHE & Citizenship: New books

We have a number of brand new books based around themes studied in our PSHE and Citizenship lessons.

These are currently on display in the LRC and available for borrowing. This is a great way for students to keep extending their learning beyond our lessons.

Mrs Cobbold

Safe Cycling to School

Encouraging Safe Cycling to School

Happy New Year!

We hope this message finds you well and that you've had a restful start to the new year. At St Benedict's Catholic School, we're committed to promoting healthy, sustainable, and enjoyable ways for our students to travel to school. Cycling is an excellent option that not only keeps students active but also helps reduce traffic congestion and supports a cleaner environment.

Cycling to School: Key Safety Advice

To ensure that cycling remains a safe and positive experience, we ask for your support in encouraging good practices. Here are some important reminders for parents and guardians:

- **Ensure Road Safety Readiness:** Please make sure your child is competent to handle potential road hazards and understands the rules of the road. Practising their route together can be a great way to build confidence.
- **Helmets and Bike Maintenance:** It is your responsibility to ensure that your child wears a helmet and that their bicycle is roadworthy. Check tyres, lights, and brakes regularly to guarantee safety.

- **Plan a Safe Route:** Quiet, less busy routes are often safer and more enjoyable. Practising these routes on the weekend can help familiarise your child with the journey and build their confidence.
- **Be Prepared:** Mornings can be rushed, so packing bags and ensuring helmets and accessories are ready the night before can save time and reduce stress.
- **Stay Visible:** For cycling in the dark or low-light conditions, a white front light, red rear light (constant or flashing), and reflectors are legal requirements. High-visibility clothing can further improve safety.

We're proud of how responsible our students are when it comes to cycling. However, we kindly remind students and parents that at the end of the school day, bikes must be walked from the bike sheds to the road. Students must not cycle against the one-way system in the bus bay area, as this is extremely dangerous given the heavy traffic in this zone.

Busy Surrounding Roads As many local education settings release students at a similar time, the roads around the school can become very congested. By reinforcing safe cycling habits and following these guidelines, we can help ensure the safety of all students and road users.

Further Advice on Cycling Safety For additional guidance on safe cycling, including tips and training resources, visit [Bikeability](#). Bikeability is a national program that provides training to help riders of all ages and abilities cycle confidently and safely.

Thank you for your continued support in keeping our students safe and promoting healthy lifestyles.

Mr Taylor

Thurston Air Cadets



Years 8 and 9 were given assemblies this week by some St Benedict's students who attend the Thurston Air Cadets. Sgts O'Flynn and Collingwood-Hall spoke enthusiastically about their experiences of being in the Air Cadets.

Sgt O'Flynn has been in the Air Cadets since the age of 14 and has had some amazing experiences, which include flying a helicopter and represented the squadron in sporting events such as athletics and rugby. Sgt O'Flynn said 'the air cadets provides unique opportunities that you won't find anywhere else, which will enhance your future prospects, helping with careers and university applications', and he urged anyone interested to contact the Commanding Officer, Miles Green, oc.863@rafac.mod.gov.uk to find out more.

Air Cadets is open to anyone between the ages of 12 and 16.

GCSE Pod



Well done to all of our Year 11 students for completing their mock exams. Exam feedback sessions may have revealed some areas that need a bit more attention. GCSEPod is an excellent way of addressing any topics that would benefit from a bit more revision during the Christmas holidays.

[Parent Resources](#)

Reporting Absences

Reporting your child's absence

If your child is unwell or has an appointment e.g. dentist/doctor could you please leave a message by 9.00am including the reason for the absence via:

Phone: 01284 753512 and Choose option 1:

And then choose option 1 for students in year 7-11 and option 2 for students in the sixth form

OR

Email: attendance@st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk

For information on what to do if your child has COVID-like symptoms please see the following link for NHS guidance:

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

If you do not inform us by 9.00am or use the above phone/email address, it will be highly likely that you will receive a text alert at home or at work. Please note the school operates a first-day response to absences.

If, in exceptional circumstances, you need to request permission for your child to be absent from school during term time, you should complete a **leave of absence application form (please see link below)**, at least three weeks in advance, stating the reason why the absence must be taken in term time. Please note that the Fixed Penalty Fine is now £80 per legal guardian for unauthorised absences of 10 sessions (5 days) or more.

<https://www.st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk/attachments/download.asp?file=74&type=pdf>

Thank you very much.

Mrs Wesley - Attendance Officer

Dates for your Diary



22 January - Year 11 Careers Workshop: Technical Courses and Apprenticeships at West Suffolk College

29 January - Year 7 Parents Evening

6 February - Year 9 Options Evening

11 February - Year 9 Parents Evening

6 March - Year 10 Parents Evening

Contact Us



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