

Dear Parents, Carers and Friends of St Paul's

I am very pleased to share with you the highlights of this term at St Paul's.

We were proud to start this academic year with our Upper School Awards in September, and just as proud to finish with our Lower School Awards on our Feast Day in June!

Two Awards stand out as representing the core values we strive for: St Barnabas Trophy and St Paul's Trophy. Congratulations to Mia who, in addition to winning the Drama Award, was nominated for the St Barnabas Trophy, the second highest award for a Lower School student. St Barnabas was the companion of St Paul, who helped him complete his missionary journeys. His name means 'Son of encouragement'. As Mia's nomination highlights, this award is given to a student who embodies the values and spirit of St Paul's school, and this came across strongly with Mia being described as 'living out the school's ethos in everything she does, encouraging everyone in school to do their best and helping to build up the community'.



Congratulations also to Mansi who won both the Humanities Award and St Paul's Trophy - the highest award for a Lower School student in school. Her nomination described her as a student who 'always looks for the solution. Without failure she considers the wellbeing of others in her community first and takes a personal responsibility to improve the life of all in our community at any opportunity. She continuously tries to improve herself, works hard and pushes herself to achieve in everything she does. She truly lives out the words of our school prayer- to act justly, love with care and tenderness and walk humbly with their God.'

We were very fortunate to have Kevin Seaward, Olympian Marathon runner, as our Keynote speaker. He shared his journey to success from a school boy in Belfast coming second last in his school's cross country run, to being a member of the Irish Marathon Team in the 2016 Olympics, and gaining an impressive 4th place in the 2018 Commonwealth Games, beating his target of finishing in the top 10. Kevin's advice to our students was to find what they are passionate about, work hard at it with determination and grit, and crucially, to keep making small, yet important changes to their attitude and motivation. Our students were very much inspired by Kevin, who showed that big, dramatic changes aren't necessarily the key to success!

Activities Day on Friday 5th July was a huge success in so many ways! Helped by beautiful weather and a range of competitive activities ranging from yogaball volleyball, human noughts and crosses and handball, tutor groups competed against each other for the coveted year group trophies. We were very proud of our Year 10 PE Sports Leaders who took a major role in the event, as part of their Leadership course and our group of dancers. Of course, the day is not only about enjoyment, it also aims to support the ethos of St. Paul's where students competed for 'Respect Points', providing all with a clear message that sports is about team work, cooperation and good sportsmanship and our students, as always, rose to the challenge.

A tremendously inspirational speaker, Gemma from the charity MOVE against Cancer, spoke about her sporting life, and the challenges she has had to face and deal with. Thanks to the generosity of our families we raised £506 for this worthy charity, one for which a number of students and their families have received support from. Planning an event of this scale with such precision takes a lot of hard work behind the scenes, so special thanks goes to all the PE Team.



Last week our Year 10 students were very busy out of school exploring their 'World of Work'. During the course of the week they met a variety of professionals who shared details of their job roles, visited a number of different industries, learned about banking, budgeting and tax and worked together as a team to deliver a "Dragon's Den" style pitch for a 3-day music festival in Leicester. The final day on Friday was an opportunity to gain experience volunteering – 80 Year 10 students ran St Paul's' Activities Day in school while the remaining students visited three different parks across the city supporting the City Council with maintaining and developing our green spaces.

During the week, many of the professionals commented on the quality of the questions that they were asked as well as the respect and positivity shown by Year 10. The students displayed tremendous teamwork, communication, delegation and creativity for the "Dragon's Den" pitches, which made the decision as to who won, very difficult... many congratulations to the creators of the 'Culturise' festival, designed to celebrate the diversity within Leicester's community.



Again, this event took many hours over the year to plan and set up, and so I would like to thank our Careers Team, Taz and Steven along with Mrs Poccesschi and Mrs Walsh for their hard work. My thanks go also to the staff who supported our students throughout the week in the various 'World of Work' activities, and our Year 10 students for taking part with such enthusiasm and respect. The final word goes to Mrs Walsh, their Progress Leader: 'I cannot say that I have ever been prouder of them – their attitude and commitment to the week was superb.'

Staff and students from year 9 and 10 were treated to, in the words of one of the audience, 'an utterly inspirational talk, truly worthy of Davis Attenborough' from a representative of Cape-ED. They learnt about life as a Marine Biologist, how to interact with any form of wildlife they encounter and the importance of looking after the environment we live in. They were encouraged to look at their disposable plastic waste usage and were challenged to make changes to their daily routines. Inspired by this, Year 10 students are already looking at ways to positively impact our environment by reducing the amount of single use plastic in school. They plan to work with staff and students from across the school to identify areas where we can make a real difference and improve our sustainability. Watch this space for further news about this campaign, and a potential opportunity for 20 students to take part in a Marine Eco-Tour to Cape Town, to learn about the incredible biodiversity of South Africa and conservation issues.





I am very proud of a special project which has been carried out every Thursday throughout the year at Evington Park by a team of students working with Mr Chapman. With the aim of creating an herbaceous border, they have worked in all weather conditions, showing resilience and commitment to the project. They earned the praise of many members of the public for their hard work and team effort. Our 'Evington Park Project' Team are a great credit to our community, living out our mission as a Catholic school.

BEFORE



AFTER



At this time of year we say a fond farewell to some of our staff who are leaving for promotion or to follow their dreams!

Our first goodbye is to Mr Henry who joined St Paul's in 2003 as Head of Science and who is retiring. Many of our students and staff have benefitted hugely from Mr Henry's teaching and leadership of Science, as well as his kind and selfless nature. We are very grateful for all that Mr Henry has done for our young people and his colleagues, and wish him a long, happy and healthy retirement.

We also say goodbye to Mrs Lamont, who was appointed Head of Science in 2016 and who leaves us today to share her talents and skills with students and staff at City of Leicester College where she has been appointed as Assistant Headteacher. We have so much to thank Mrs Lamont for – to name but a few, her aspirational leadership of the faculty, great team spirit and amazing after-school Science clubs such as Potion Club and Dissection club! We thank Mrs Lamont for her hard work and incredible impression she is leaving with us, and we know that her new school are lucky to have her.

In saying goodbye to Mrs Ndoh we thank her not only for her teaching in Science since she joined us in 2008 but also the tremendous impact she has had on engaging our students in Science through the STEM Programme and the many Science workshops and enrichment opportunities she has procured. Mrs Ndoh is leaving us to take up a role as Lead Practitioner at Park Lodge Academy and we wish her success and happiness in her new school.

Another long serving member of staff we say farewell to is Mrs James, who has been with us for 13 years. As a TA, Mrs James has been instrumental in leading literacy interventions for a number of our students. Our very best wishes go with Mrs James and her husband who leaves us for a new chapter in her life in Ibiza!

Some of our colleagues who are leaving may not have been with us for many years but each one of them has brought something special to our Catholic family community.

First of all, Miss Caple, who is leaving to explore life in Australia! In the short time she has been teaching PE at St Paul's Miss Caple, has made an impact on many young people, not only those she has taught. Her passion for engaging girls in PE has led to many being inspired to take up girls' football and Netball. Further to this, Miss Caple has worked with students on the Duke of Edinburgh Award for two years. We wish her safe and joyful travels and much happiness and success in her future.

For Mr White, this is the second time we have wished him farewell! We are delighted that Mr White joined us again in August 2018 on a one year contract to teach English. He has also worked on reading interventions, with impressive outcomes for the young people he and his team of sixth form 'reading buddies' worked with. We may well see Mr White again! In the meantime however, we wish him every success in the business venture he and his wife have set up.

We also say goodbye and good luck to:

- Miss Christopherson who has taught Geography this year on a one-year contract
- Ms Ntakouvanou, who worked as a TA and is now been offered a place at Birmingham University to complete a PGCE in Mathematics
- Ms Naqvi, who worked as a cover supervisor since January 2019 before securing a teaching role at Beauchamp College

There a few other goodbyes I'd like to offer, and these are to the students, parent/carers and staff at St Paul's, as I bid you farewell. When I first arrived at St Paul's 11 years ago as Assistant Headteacher I realised what a very special community we are. I have been very privileged to have served the school as Deputy Headteacher and, in this last year, Headteacher. I have learnt a lot from the tremendous young people, parents/carers and staff I have worked with throughout the years and can honestly say that I feel very blessed. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you, our parents/carers, for your support for our school, and on a personal note for the many caring messages you have sent. As I leave to take up the post of Director of Safeguarding at St Thomas Aquinas CMAT, I am delighted that Mrs Conaghan will lead St Paul's from August as Principal of the school. I wish Mrs Conaghan, our staff, students and families' peace, happiness and success as our schools moves on to the next stage.

May God's blessing be upon you all.

Mrs Gillespie