



"Growing Together for Life"

# The Newman Catholic Collegiate Summer 2024 Newsletter







## INTRODUCTION FROM OUR CSEL, IAN BEARDMORE



Dear Parents and Carers,

**It is with great pleasure that I introduce the 2024 Summer Term Collegiate Newsletter.**

First and foremost, congratulations to all the children who have taken examinations, particularly those in Year 11 and 13. We are incredibly proud of their hard work and dedication to their studies. Additionally, well done to the Year 6 children for completing their SATs. It is wonderful that the vast majority of these children will continue their educational journey within the Collegiate at St. Margaret Ward. A heartfelt thank you to our wonderful staff who support the students so diligently, many giving up their own time to offer extra revision sessions or activities for the children.

I also want to extend my congratulations to all those who have received the Holy Sacraments of Reconciliation, Communion and Confirmation this term. We pray that the Holy Spirit guides you along life's path. Remember, Mass is a wonderful opportunity to pause, reflect, and listen to the Word of God. As Catholics, we have the privilege and profound gift of receiving Jesus in the form of Holy Communion.

We have had many success stories this year. Our Lady and St. Benedict received an outstanding judgment from Ofsted, making it one of four schools in our Collegiate to achieve this accolade. Following this success, the school was awarded the Outstanding Progress in Primary Education at the Education Business Awards in London. It is wonderful to see one of our schools being acknowledged nationally for the amazing work they do.

As you know, we are extremely proud of the transition work we do. Starting in September, there will be transport from each of our primary schools to St. Margaret Ward. This builds on the

success of our minibuses from four of our schools this year. The additional benefits of our minibuses mean that the extra opportunities we offer our children can be provided at a much-reduced rate.

Thank you to the vast majority of our parents who support us with our push on attendance. It was wonderful to see the large number of children attending our 100% attendance rewards trips. I hope this number continues to rise, as the importance of attendance cannot be underestimated. Quite simply, attending school leads to better grades.

I am sure you are aware that we have a number of Summer School opportunities available during the break. Please contact your school for more information. All the opportunities in the Collegiate are free, so be sure to take advantage of them.

Finally, thank you all for your invaluable support. We are blessed to teach such wonderful children, and our job is made so much easier with your support in what we do.

I hope you all have a wonderful summer and look forward to welcoming you back in September when we can continue to grow together for life.

God Bless  
**Mr I Beardmore**  
**CSEL (Catholic Senior Executive Leader)**  
**The Newman Catholic Collegiate.**



# ST WILFRID'S CAREERS DAY!

St Wilfrid's organised their very own Career's Day during the summer term. This was in response to a recent pupil questionnaire that revealed that pupils would like to know more about the many different types of work and jobs they could aspire to have, when they are grown-ups!

St Wilfrid's had many visitors in school with a vast array of professional experiences. There was an RAF engineer, a professional football coach, a chef, a solicitor, a police officer, a nurse and a local independent bakery owner.

Each class got to meet the visitors and hear about what they got up to in their jobs.

They discussed the skills and talents that were suited to working in the different professions and links were made to the subjects the pupils are currently studying in school. The children then asked many inquisitive questions to ensure they got a sound understanding of each professional's job - including questions on the number of hours they had to work and the amount of money that they were paid!

The day was an all-round success for the pupils and left them all intrigued and inspired to keep working hard in order to achieve their own goals and aspirations in the future.



# ST. PETER'S LIVE SIMPLY AWARD – CARING FOR GOD'S CREATIONS...

To support with the school's Live Simply action plan, St. Peter's has formed a Gardening club that has been running for the last term. This includes members from both the school council and Eco Club. In developing the prayer garden, the children have been focussed on weeding and planting specific plants, in particular ones which will attract bees in order to support plant growth in the local community. The school's site supervisor has been involved too, sharing his expertise showing the children how they can reuse lavender cuttings to make new plants. Various year groups have also supported with the development of the garden area through Science lessons - this has included sunflowers from Year 1 and broad beans from EYFS.

As stewards of God's creation we have been given an incredible privilege to provide new habitats and biodiversity for many of God's creatures

and children at the school have shown they understand their responsibility to care for and nurture God's creations.

In the Book of Genesis, we are called to till and care for the garden of the world (Gen 2:15).

"Tilling" refers to cultivating, ploughing or working while "keeping" means caring, protecting, overseeing and preserving. This implies a relationship of mutual responsibility between human beings and nature"

Our fulfilment as people, as Catholics, and as Christians, depends on the relationship of care that we establish with the world. Thus, the commitment to our common home is not optional; we are all called by God to be caretakers of creation. (St. John Paul II)



# A PLACE OF REFLECTION, CALM AND WELLBEING...

As a result of this hard work, the prayer garden has become a very special place for the families and children to use, as they add their own prayers and offerings. It is a still, calm and tranquil place for prayer where thanks and praise can be given to God for his beautiful creations. The school has also welcomed local parishioners for a thanksgiving prayer service.

As part of its Live Simply pledge, the children have also begun the journey of growing their own food with strawberries, pumpkins, leeks, beans and potatoes currently being grown!

Together as a school they are all playing a part to ensure the world turns out in the way God intended it to be.



St. Peter's Catholic Academy



# LONDON FULL OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR OLSB



## Part One

Back in April, Our Lady and Saint Benedict Catholic Academy in Abbey Hulton, were notified that the school had been shortlisted in the category of Outstanding Progress in a primary school by the Education Business Awards. They were invited to London for the awards ceremony. On 12th June, the Principal, Sarah Clowes and Vice Principal, Janine Exon, travelled to the Leonardo Royal London St. Paul's Hotel, where the winners of the 2024 Education Business Awards were announced. The awards celebrated the incredible achievements in all aspects of school life. The winners of the 2024 Education Business Awards were revealed, shining a light on the outstanding achievements of schools and academies across the UK.

The award for **Outstanding Progress - Primary School, sponsored by Action Mats** was awarded to Our Lady and Saint Benedict Catholic Academy.

The award was presented by Ashley John-Baptiste - a young BBC broadcast journalist and presenter who has a remarkable story of how he overcame his troubled childhood to study at one of the world's best universities.



The school was noted for its strong relationships between pupils, their families and staff which has helped Our Lady and Saint Benedict Catholic Academy move from 'requires improvement' in 2019 to 'outstanding' in its latest Ofsted report last November. Led by Principal Sarah Clowes the rapid progress has been attributed in part to prioritising reading, with pupils able to use vocabulary with precision and great confidence. Opportunities to benefit from outdoor learning are provided for all pupils.

Mrs Clowes commented 'I want to say a big thank you to our children, families, and staff for all the hard work and support that they have given on this journey to outstanding which has led to us receiving this award. We are proud to bring the award back home to Stoke-on-Trent. I am immensely proud of the school. I am delighted that the progress that has been made in the school, (which is due to the hard work and dedication of all of the staff) has been recognised through winning this award. The school are very proud to be part of The Newman Catholic Collegiate who have supported the school on its journey to Outstanding. It has been a huge team effort where rapid improvements have taken place which are allowing our children to flourish. I wish to congratulate the whole OLSB family on the award.



## Part Two

On Monday 29th April, Year 4 visited London. This was such a fantastic opportunity for the pupils. The trip allowed them to experience a real train and underground journey, to visit The Houses of Parliament, ride the London Eye and see the world beyond their own home location. The pupils returned to school full of enthusiasm and have not stopped talking about the 'best day ever!' The school were delighted to receive a message commending the children on their wonderful manners, and polite and courteous attitudes. Following their visit to the Houses of Parliament, where Year 4 met Jo Gideon, the Conservative MP for Stoke-on-Trent Central



(which includes Abbey Hulton). Jo visited school on Friday 3rd May to congratulate the school on its Outstanding OFSTED report. She joined their assembly where she spoke to the pupils about her role as an MP and answered lots of questions. She was very impressed with the school's wonderful pupils and thanked the staff for everything they have done to make the school the wonderful place that it is.

At OLSB they try to provide the pupils with as many opportunities as possible to build cultural capital and to see and experience life beyond the local area of Abbey Hulton. This is only possible due to the dedication and support of its wonderful staff team. This, along with the pupils and families is what makes OLSB the very special place that it is.



# ST MARY'S CELEBRATES THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION

On Saturday 15th June, 17 children from St Mary's Catholic Academy celebrated the sacrament of Confirmation with Cannon David and Father John. The children had prepared for this with maturity and were a credit to themselves, their families and school. We hope that their continued journey with Christ will deepen their connection with the church and guide them in love, strength, courage and faith.

"Whoever loves me will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our dwelling with him". (John, 14)



## ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST ARE WORKING HARD ON SUSTAINABILITY AND ARE PLACED RUNNERS UP IN THE PRIMARY AWARDS FOR GREEN EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS (PAGES) 2024

This term the school were delighted to find out that they had been selected as a runner up in the Green Action Takers category of the Primary Awards for Green Education in Schools (PAGES) 2024 with their project 'Sustainable Development'.

Almost 35,000 young people were involved in the creation of entries for this year's competition with lots of diverse approaches that schools in the UK are taking to deliver environmental education to their children.

"With over 270 entries received, it was a very difficult decision to select our winners and runners-up, so you and all of the children involved should be very proud of this achievement.

"We thought your presentation was excellent and the videos really helped to bring your work to life. It was lovely to see so much environmental learning across the different year groups. Special congratulations to the Eco Council for spearheading all the great environmental work!" (PAGES Judges 2024)

The school has a certificate to commemorate their achievement and a prize of £200!

The children have worked extremely hard over the year on different aspects of sustainable development across the whole school including:

- Before the new build, they nurtured cuttings from the original prayer garden so that the school didn't lose any species of plant
- They always replant their seeds from the different flowers that they grow
- They grow, harvest and eat their own vegetables
- The Nursery children have been making greenhouses out of lollipop sticks and plastic

sheets to watch germination. They made their own garden canes from a bamboo plant. They also replanted all of their indoor seedlings outside when they were ready and are continuing to track their growth

- The school's Early Years children have planted strawberries inside their old wellies
- They recycle rainwater that they use for watering the plants
- They use a moisture monitor to check on the plants so that they don't overwater them
- They have completed the Better Planet Schools module on Food and Farming
- They have a very active bug hotel
- They've planted over 200 trees, during and since the new build
- They've completed community litter picks throughout the year
- They recycle their paper, cardboard, plastic and food waste
- They've been awarded Newcastle in Bloom Best School prize in their area for the past seven years and the judges loved their entry this year - so fingers crossed!





# LIBRARY UPGRADE FOR ST JOSEPH'S PUPILS

Pupils at St Joseph's Catholic Academy love to read! We know that: "The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go."

From Pre School all the way to Year Six, reading is the most important and fun part of the day. Every day, in every class, pupils practise reading with their teacher, a partner and independently. Pupils choose books to read at home from the library and they listen to their teacher read a story to them.

**In a recent Storytime, the children were enjoying:**

**Pre School** - "Going on a Bear Hunt" by Michael Rosen

**Nursery** - "Oi Frog" by Kes Gray

**Reception** - "The Rainbow Fish" by Marcus Pfister

**Year One** - "A Squash and a Squeeze" by Julia Donaldson

**Year Two** - "A Monster Ate My Packed Lunch" by Pamela Butchart



**Year Three** - "The Boy Who Grew Dragons" by Andy Shepherd

**Year Four** - "The Queen's Nose" by Dick King Smith

**Year Five** - "The Nowhere Emporium" by Ross MacKenzie

**Year Six** - "The Boy in the Girl's Bathroom" by Louis Sachar

Year Three told us "I like to relax and listen to a fun story." "I love stories." "Miss McGough does the funny voices which makes the story even more interesting."



The older children love to read to the younger children on special occasions such as World Book Day.

Principal, Mrs Hamilton, even asks Santa to deliver a special story present at Christmas.

Pupils also get to take home a book prize when they've completed lots of super reading at home and written about it in their Reading Logs.

With so much reading, the school library is very well used. Recently, the library was 'Closed For Refurbishment' whilst the school worked to upgrade it. They were proud to help others by passing on the books that they no longer needed to local and international charities so that other children can enjoy stories too. The children were very excited waiting for the new library launch! The school bought lots of new books for its library; it's now full of exciting and interesting books by authors such as Tom Palmer, Jess Butterworth and David Almond. They have numerous fiction and non-fiction books linked to areas of the curriculum as well as a range of new poetry books and picture books too.

Along the library bench, stand some beautiful non-fiction books for children to get lost in. These hard backs are wonderfully illustrated and some stand

much taller than an average book, capturing the children's attention and teaching them about the world.

The team of Pupil Librarians are eagerly awaiting their training so that they can take responsibility for keeping the library tidy and organised and can help other children to choose new books. "Recommended Reads" and "If you liked... Try these...." posters (as well as recommendations from others) help pupils to vary their reading and to try new books and authors.

Every class visits the library at least once a week to browse the fiction and non-fiction books and choose a book to take home. Class Storytime takes place in the library once a week too. The school is very grateful for the funding secured to purchase new books for its library upgrade.

St Joseph's has also taken part in the SKYARTS Access All Arts programme recently. Nursery and Reception have listened to music and made connections to places they have been to or people they know. KS2 children have made connections with rhythm patterns, by editing a score of Old MacDonald and then playing their own variations on tuned instruments such as recorders and glockenspiels.





# OUR LADY OF GRACE PREPARE FOR LIVE SIMPLY AWARD

Preparing for the Live Simply award was an exciting adventure for Our Lady of Grace pupils. First, they brainstormed ways to make the school and community more eco-friendly. They decided to focus on reducing waste, saving energy, and helping those in need. Pupils made posters to encourage recycling and set up recycling bins in each classroom. They each took turns being "energy monitors," making sure lights were turned off when not in use and reminding everyone to unplug devices. They also organised a pre-loved uniform sale where the community were encouraged to donate used uniform to the school to enable its families to purchase them. Working together on these projects made the children feel like they were making a real difference.

Achieving the Live Simply award was a proud moment for all the school. After months of hard work, they presented their projects to the Live Simply judges. The judges were impressed by the school's efforts and creativity. Pupils showed them their recycling posters, the compost bin, and photos from the clothing drive and many of their other projects to live sustainably. They explained how being energy monitors helped reduce electricity usage in the school. When the school received the award, the children felt a sense of accomplishment and realised the importance of living simply to protect the planet. It was a great lesson in teamwork and environmental stewardship that they will carry with them forever.



# WHOLE-SCHOOL TRIP TO SOUTHPORT FOR ST GEORGE & ST MARTIN

On Tuesday 11th June, the whole school gathered a little earlier than normal to embark on its annual trip to the seaside.

The children had been buzzing with excitement for days and the day finally arrived. The five buses left on time, filled with chatter and laughter. For many, this was their first visit to the seaside, making the trip even more special.

When they arrived, the sight of the sea (although a long way off!) and a completely empty beach greeted them.

The children were all shown where they were allowed to go, and they started to explore the beach.



The tide had been in recently, so there were lots of little pools to paddle in and explore. Children hunted for crabs, shells and other interesting creatures.

All the different classes played with each other and had fun building sandcastles, digging holes, playing catch, playing football and running around.

Lunch was a picnic on the beach and then more playing.

All too quickly the day was over, and it was time to get ready to return to school. The bus trip home was much quieter with the sea air meaning lots of children fell asleep.

The trip to the seaside was a great experience for everyone. It offered a chance for all children to experience the seaside and spend time with children from other classes playing and exploring. The memories from this trip will last a long time, reminding them of the fun they had.





# ARCHBISHOP CELEBRATES MASS AT ST MARGARET WARD



As the country took to the polls on 4 July, St Margaret Ward hosted a VIP visitor.

Accepting the invitation from Principal Dominic McKenna to visit the school, Archbishop Bernard Longley celebrated a special Mass to mark the end of the school's year of mission.

Find out more and see a selection of photos here. [🖱️](#)



# COLLEGIATE MUSIC UPDATE

The summer term is a perfect time for performances, a time to show the progress made this year and celebrate completed work. Our musicians and classes around the Collegiate have been preparing a host of events.

Families and friends have enjoyed singing performances from whole classes, soloists, school choirs and City Songbirds. Representatives from each academy came together at the Summer Concert at St Margaret Ward, called "Movie Magic", to perform as a Collegiate Choir. They presented four songs including the powerful "Go the Distance" from the animation, Hercules.

From instrumentalists there have been class performances and uplifting works from various orchestras, jazz orchestra, instrument club groups, city ensembles and soloists. Each performance of just a few minutes can represent hours of preparation and practice, building confidence and developing essential skills in teamwork. For some, managing performance nerves and channelling anxieties into concentration is the greatest challenge; for others stepping up and participating, being

encouraged to be fully present in the moment of a performance is a new or unusual feeling to experience.

Some students have been preparing for music exams this term and we wish them good luck and hope their dedication translates into success. For Henry, in Year 7 at St Margaret Ward, practice made perfect as he won the Stoke-on-Trent Young Musician of the Year Junior title and won the opportunity to make a solo appearance on stage at the Victoria Hall. The Collegiate music team congratulate our students who have all performed with true excellence.

Other events have also been taking place. St Joseph's Academy participated in SKYARTS Access All Arts week at the end of June. Based on the theme of connections, children linked music they heard to places and people, and connected to rhythms and melodies through instrumental activities. Some of our schools were invited to attend an Olympics-themed concert presented by the Halle Orchestra at Victoria Hall at the start of July. It was a rare opportunity to see a live professional orchestra with such a powerful sound, students were both amazed and inspired.







“Growing Together for Life”

## AND FINALLY ...

As we come to the end of this school year, we thank our Heavenly Father for giving us the opportunity to be a part of the lives of our pupils. Bring us back refreshed and ready for a new term.

Enjoy the summer holidays - our schools re-open on **Wednesday 4 September 2024.**

