



Dear Parent/Guardian,

I hope you enjoy looking through this Christmas newsletter and get a feel for some of the events that have been happening this term at St George. As the year draws to a close, you can all reflect with real pride on your son/daughter

this term.

Despite the challenges of the COVID 19 pandemic our students have remained supportive, resilient and determined that it does not affect their education and their happiness at St George. The saliva testing programme has made a huge difference to the school, reducing all the disruption to lessons that lateral flow tests were causing as well as giving the reassurance that we are all safe. We are really pleased that the number of cases in students and staff is very small.

When it is published, I hope you take some time to read the report from OFSTED following our Section 8 inspection on the 16th and 17th November. We believe the report really captures what our school is all about and can only thank you for the support that you have given to our St George family.

We are very pleased with how well our Year 7 students have started and the number of pupils who are now participating in a wide range of extra-curricular activities. More than 85% of key-stage-three have signed up to a club this term. Many of those students receive a reward for their attendance in our Christmas rewards assembly.

We are delighted to see our Carol Concert back and trips now starting to take place once again. During this term we have held a number of events to highlight the importance of equality including black history month, anti-bullying

week and EARA day. A big thank you to our EARA group and Equality advocates for the excellent organisation of these events. Thank you to everyone who completed the survey on prejudicial language and sexual awareness and sexual online abuse. The feedback from this has proved very helpful and allowed us to tailor our next steps with our students and staff next term.

The school is now the largest it has ever been with close to 1000 pupils on roll, yet we believe we are still very much a family who will continue to work hard to get the best out of each other. Next term we start building work on our new library resource centre, dining room, chapel, additional toilets and new front of school with office space. It is anticipated this will be completed by Easter 2023.

Finally, I hope you have the chance to spend some quality time together with your family and of course my best wishes for a Happy Christmas and New Year.

James Habberley
Headteacher

Diary Dates

Please check our website for important dates in our school calendar. You can find exam information in the Teaching and Learning section of the website. Please also look out for important announcements on our news pages.

January 4th - Return to school

Equality at St George



Recent events and media headlines have encouraged us all to reflect on those systemic and, indeed, endemic issues that pervade our society at every level, and how we, in education, with the privileged role we play in developing the 'whole child', can make a difference in shifting cultures and have a real and significant impact on moving towards a more inclusive society for all. The Equality Act 2010 places a statutory duty on schools and other organisations across the UK to address discrimination and promote opportunity for all those marginalised communities within society. School leaders are required to demonstrate due regard for the statutory duties enshrined within the act. As governors, we need to be able to evidence how the ethos, environment and curriculum of the school contribute to

the fulfilment of these duties in eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and foster good relations across all the protected characteristics within the act.

In order to ensure a robust and comprehensive response to some of the issues that have been highlighted by recent events in the national media, the senior leadership team at St George have appointed James Preston as our designated Equality and Diversity lead in school. James has been extremely busy in planning an action plan for a whole school approach to tackling inequality and discrimination including parents/carers and the wider community. Initial first steps are outlined below:

* Established equality priorities for the year and shared these with staff and students through assemblies, these

include challenging and responding to:

- racially motivated prejudicial language and discrimination
- sexual harassment and sexual abuse homophobic language.

* Appointed Equality Advocates (Miss Ouvry, Ms Smallwood, Mr Ndabala, Mr Preston) and promoted their roles within the school community to support students and staff.

Supported the EARA group in organising the EARA day with a specific focus on Black History Month

* Administered surveys to gauge students' and parents' views about prejudicial language and behaviour and sexual harassment in school in order to establish a baseline going forward.

Providing our young people with the opportunity to shape all those aspects of their lives which affect them is key to determining their futures as active citizens across society. The role that students can play in actively providing challenge and promoting equality across their peer groups can be a very powerful instrument for change.

St George students participate as active members of a county wide pupil voice group, the Equality and Rights Advocates (EARA) which aspires to:

"Challenge the way both students and teachers think and view our world and our fellow inhabitants and aspire to reduce the discrimination that students of different groups face at school, whether it be down to their race, sexuality, appearance or lifestyle."

This provides students with the opportunity to work collaboratively with young people from other schools to promote equality and challenge discrimination within their school community and beyond.

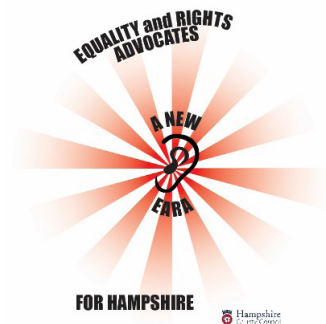
Equality and Rights Advocates

Our students this year are all new to EARA and so we are spending the year establishing the group and educating them on important issues of equality. We hope to be the driving force in creating a more tolerant and inclusive community, being able to give a voice to those who need it.

The EARA group feels like more than just a club to talk about equality. EARA is about trying to make changes within our school and coming together, respecting each other's opinions and ideas; here we are given a voice to discuss matters that are really important to us. It is also a great community to feel safe and welcome in because they all understand our hurt about the negative impacts

The school vision and ethos at St George embodies the school's commitment to valuing and respecting the differences between people and providing opportunities for understanding and responding to the needs of different individuals and groups. Where pupils have opportunities to understand the effect their behaviour has on others and how others view the world, their tolerance of difference increases, and they are more likely to be able to acknowledge and celebrate diversity and grow up to be engaged global citizens who value equality, human rights and each other.

St George Equality Objectives can be found on the website; these are reviewed every four years and feed into the school improvement plan as part of our Equalities policy.



"The fact that this work has been largely student led means it has been taken far more seriously...the impact of this has been that the students have willingly accepted the premise of the nine protected characteristics and started a debate about tolerance, acceptance, integration...alongside our core values." (Headteacher)

Minnie Moore, Parent Governor / HIAS Rights, Diversity and Social Justice Education Adviser

brought by inequality. I think it really does change peoples' emotions and education on how they think before acting and it really puts on an impact on society to really respect and let different people in, even if they are gay or female or disabled.

Going to the EARA meeting in Winchester was so empowering. We were able to talk to other like- minded students and realise that the problems we feel we are facing in our school is happening in other schools as well. We were able to discuss issues safely and felt that everyone at the meeting respected what we had to say. We felt so empowered by so many of the other students and took on a lot of great ideas." (St George EARA members)

Blue Days

Once again St George students have risen to the occasion in support of Anti Bullying Week. The whole school, staff and all year groups showed their solidarity with the initiative to raise awareness and the effort to address bullying whether in or out of school.

The playground at break and lunchtime was full of students who had made the effort to wear an item of blue clothing for the day and the message was reinforced with tutor activities that explored the ways of bullying and how to combat it.

Well done to all who took part.



Mental Health Awareness

As part of our engagement with Mental Health Awareness Week, we included a musical treat with a message in the form of the singing duo who spoke about aspects of mental health to their audience of students after performing a number of well received songs.



Chris Lubbe



Throughout the year we stage events as part of enrichment, safeguarding and PHSE studies. These events are often in the form of guest speakers, performances by actors and musicians or group activities. This term has seen a number of excellent events that have both entertained and provided some thought provoking insights to our students.

In October we welcomed back Chris Lubbe who gave a rivetting and engaging description of his early life growing up in South Africa and his role as former bodyguard to Nelson Mandella. He spoke of what it is like to grow up under the oppression of apartheid and how his career led him to meet dignitaries such as The Queen and Barak Obama.

Team Building Days

In October, we were pleased to be able to host two team building days to help the new Year 7 cohort settle in. Our students took part in a 'spirituality day' and a 'Ferry Crofts activity day', which involved Ferry Crofts coming into St George with a climbing wall, zorbing, team building games and archery set for the Year 7s to enjoy.

We appreciated that the students were not able to have their usual transition days in the summer term due to the Covid pandemic and so we wanted to allow them to get to know each other, understand more about our Catholic ethos, and have a bit of fun! They seemed to really enjoy the activities and it was lovely to see them all making friends and trying new things.



Eco Committee

After putting it on hold throughout lockdown, the Eco-Committee is back (with a brand new display board in the Bethlehem building to boot). The Eco-Committee will be meeting approximately every two weeks in order to plan projects which will reduce the impacts our St George community has on the environment. If any students have any suggestions, then please write it down and place it in the Eco-Committee suggestions which is attached to the Eco-Committee display board outside B3. Alternatively get in touch with one of our members:

Year 7: Adrian YG, Luke O'F, Angeline S

Year 8: Iga G, Mia B

Year 9: Nicola D

Year 10: Shannon D, Stefan J

Year 11: Emily L, Ruby C

Christmas Carol

This term, we welcomed Quantum Theatre to St George, as they performed 'A Christmas Carol' for our Year 9 students. Scrooge's transformation from a miserly misanthropist, to a benevolent and affable man was performed fantastically by the theatre company, as they transported us back to Victorian London. Students thoroughly enjoyed the performance, so we hope to take advantage of many more live performances in the near future.



Navy Engineering

In October the Design & Technology department welcomed a team of engineers from HMS Prince of Wales of the Royal Navy, to work with students from years 8 and 9 to enlighten them about careers in engineering. The workshops saw students participating in a range of activities ranging from boat building challenges, to design tasks focusing on the specific areas that the Navy engineers specialise in through their job roles.

During the day, St George students had the opportunity to discuss what working within the engineering industry was like, and the different opportunities that they could pursue following on from the study of Design & Technology. Judging by the smiles on their faces and feedback received from them, our students had a great time and embraced this opportunity with open arms.

The sailors who joined us for the day would like to extend a huge well done to all involved, "the students we saw were fantastic and did a smashing job at the challenges we set, we were all very impressed by the engineers of the future!". We would like to thank Miss Fisher and the team of Navy engineers for putting so much time and energy into the planning of this excellent event.



Remembrance Day

Our Remembrance Day ceremony echoed around the school as The Last Post was broadcast to each classroom.

Our own exceptional musicians **Luke O (year 7)** and **Ffionn L (year 8)**, were filmed performing in front of our new building beneath our Aspire values.

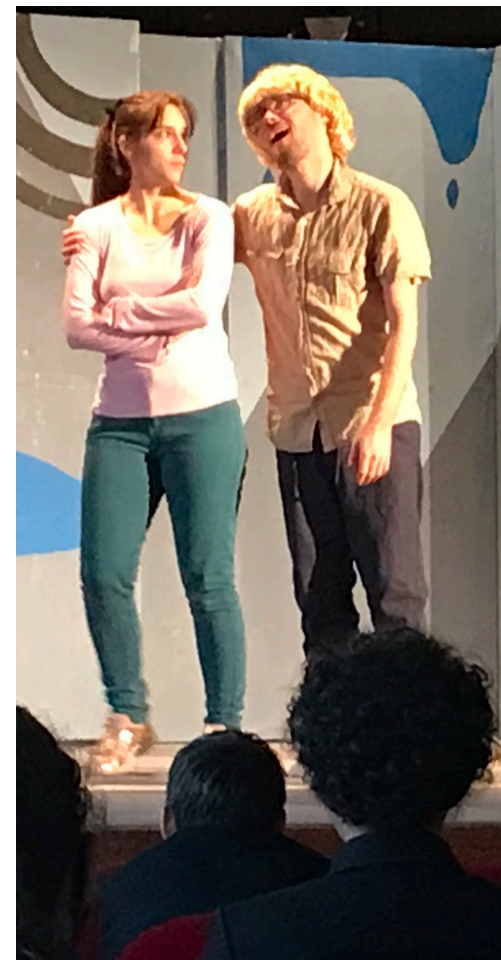


French Play

In November, the MFL department at St George invited the theatre company Onatti in to stage an entirely French play for our students in Year 8-11. The play, titled 'Mon père ne me comprend pas', centred around the character of Hélène on her 16th birthday, when her celebrations didn't quite go as planned...

This was a great opportunity for our young linguists to experience the French language in a more immersive and authentic context and to practise their listening skills. After a discussion and Q&A at the end, students expressed that they had been able to follow the story well and even our younger learners seemed confident in their understanding, which was great to see.

We will be running a similar experience for Year8-11 Spanish students on Monday 17th January, and hope to see many attending. (don't forget to get your reply slips in now!)



French Restaurant

Year 11 French swapped their sandwiches for *salade de chèvre chaud* and flapjacks for *île flottante* when they left the St George canteen for La Parisienne in Romsey in October. They were thrilled to *escargot* somewhere more sophisticated for lunch, where they enjoyed a delightfully delicious and authentic French dining experience.

The pupils all put their recently-learnt vocabulary into practice by speaking to the waiters in French and members of the public commented on how polite and respectful they were too; they really did St George incredibly proud! The class also enthusiastically tried every dish and were truly *gâtés* by the selection of stunning desserts in particular. Miam miam !

Our current Year10 French will be delighted to hear that we plan to do the same trip when they study a module on French dishes after February half term.



Miss Simpson's Year 11 Spanish groups also enjoyed a special Spanish lunch at La Regata restaurant in Southampton. The students experienced authentic food which they had to order in Spanish.



Fundraising and Charity

One of our charity events for Marys Meals Charity was World Porridge Day. School kitchen staff helped and served porridge to our students on two mornings in October and helped raise £150.00 to feed hungry children in some of the poorest parts of the world so they can have an education. On top of this it also gave our students an opportunity to sit and have breakfast together with some delicious porridge made by Cherie and Kym and served with a smile.

In addition we also had 'pink day' for breast cancer research which raised over £800, a great effort. At present we are collecting for the 'Poitier foodbank' and collecting hats, gloves and scarves for the 'Apostleship of the Sea' for sailors who deliver our goods from around the world.

Our Year 7s had their welcome mass in October plus a spirituality day with the help of 'Southampton City Mission where we looked at Christian life and prayer.

Many thanks to all the priests who came in for 'Confession Day' in December where the forgiveness of the Lord was given to all those who came along a very blessed day.

As we draw closer to Christmas in these troubled times let us turn more to Our Lord Jesus who comes to bring light in the darkness. I wish you all a happy and Holy Christmas.

In an exciting venture three of our staff are running the London Marathon in October 2022 for charity and we as a school are committed to help them raise as much money for their charities as possible.

Mr Habberley and Mr Ellerby are running for CAFOD and Miss Cecil is running for Hospice UK. Many of our fund raisers and non uniform days over the next nine months will be for their chosen charities as well as a few other events in 2022. If you would like to support them please get in touch.

We have a just giving page set up with CAFOD in which you can donate as these members of staff step up their training. London Marathon 2022 Let's go.....



www.justgiving.com/fundraising/stgclondon-marathon

Presentation Evening



Despite unique and challenging circumstances over the last couple of years, the class of 2021 did themselves and our school proud. At our Presentation Evening in November they were re-united with their teachers and tutor groups to celebrate their achievements.

Our results have maintained our position as the leading mixed secondary school in Southampton and our progress score (the difference between predicted and actual progress while at school) sets us among the top 10% of schools nationally.

Tutors welcomed back their former students with anecdotes to remind them of their time at St George and it was a great opportunity for them to meet up again before they go on to the next stage of their lives.

Every one of our students who left in July has gone on to further education or employment.

Sailaway

This year we hosted our annual 'Sail Away Challenge' for our Year 7s, which was fantastic as we have not been able to do this for a while due to Covid. The Year 7s had to learn to work as a team in their tutor groups to create the fastest, or best designed wind powered buggy.

The pupils learn lots of skills throughout this task; creativity, resilience, teamwork, confidence to share their ideas and many more as they worked in teams to create their unique buggys using limited materials.

At the end of the morning, all of the teams gathered together in the hall where they competed to find the fastest buggy within the year group. The whole cohort were really enthusiastic and engaged with the competition, but also highly respectful to each other.

It was a great way for them to get to know each other while at the same time having fun and learning new skills.



Sport

Year 9, 10 and 11 Boys Football

The upper boys football teams in Years 9, 10 and 11 have been incredibly busy this first term, playing a number of matches in the league across Southampton, with each of the three teams currently sitting top of their respective tables. Each of the teams will have a couple of fixtures left in the new year to bring home the long-awaited trophies after a long wait because of COVID. Congratulations also to **Sean M, Kian D** and **Henry M** for continuing to represent the Southampton Schools Boys and **Malachi O** who is still signed on with Bournemouth FC and looking to secure a full-time contract when he gets to Year 11.

KS4 Boys Badminton

The KS4 boy's badminton team has representatives in Year 10 and have pulled together to form a fantastic team winning the KS4 Southampton Schools Badminton League. They have beaten both Cantell School and Bitterne Park School and have now reached the Hampshire championships at Westgate in January to represent Southampton. The team consisted of **Rafael A, Alan R, Emmanuel S** and **W**.

Year 7, 8, 9 Cross Country

During the COVID 19 pandemic, cross country has grown and developed its strength in both participation and results. Within the Southampton Schools Cross Country, we have seen success in Year 7, 8 and 9 with **Niamh M, Francesca J, Stanley P, Harriet J** and **Samuel M** all becoming city champions. In the 'National Cup Cross Country' we reached the regional race in Tonbridge after coming second in the team race. Within that race Francesca Joslin was the Hampshire and Dorset ESAA Champion for Year 7/8 Girls. **Stanley P** was runner up in the Boys race in the same competition.

At the 'Inter Counties' we had four teams in the age group categories and all teams finished in the top ten schools. Individual success came from **Francesca J (2nd), Stanley P (3rd), Sophie L (6th), Niamh M (10th)** in their respective races.

