



The Crimson Cross
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THE FIRST EDITION OF THE CRIMSON CROSS

Merry Christmas!

Hello and welcome to the first ever edition of Saint George Catholic College's school newspaper, The Crimson Cross.

All the articles, interviews, puzzles and prayers have been planned and written by pupils of the school. We are very proud of the dedication shown by everyone involved and have been hugely impressed by the independent work they have carried to produce the content of this newspaper.

We hope that this is the first of many editions of The Crimson Cross and plan to publish every term with all the latest news for you to read and enjoy.

All that's left to say is a huge thank you to all of the amazing pupils who have contributed and to wish yourselves a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Miss J Templeman and Mr J Scott.

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PUPIL SHOUT OUT



Pupil Shout out is a way to celebrate the kindness of other pupils and the way they use their talents to benefit others. This pupil particularly impressed the Crimson Cross Shout Out Team with their exemplary attitude towards others and their can-do attitude when faced with difficult challenges. This is why they win the half terms Pupil Shout Out.

This Term's Pupil of the term winner is.... Cyprian Bugla!!! (7TE)

We went to ask Cyprian a few questions to see how he feels.

Q1: How do you feel after winning Pupil Shout of this half term?



“Quite proud of myself and I didn’t expect to be noticed.”

Q2: Did anyone inspire you to be kind and thoughtful?

“My parents taught me to be kind and nice to others.”

Q3: Do you have any advice to anybody hoping to win Pupil Shout Out?

“Be the best you can be, good things always have a way of coming back to you.”

TRIP OF THE TERM

GEOGRAPHY TRIP TO CADBURY WORLD

The geography trip to Cadbury World in Birmingham took place on the 2nd of December. We interviewed three people about their experience on this exciting trip. This is a summary of what they had to say.

We asked what their favourite thing was at Cadbury World, for this we got mixed answers, but our most common was the **free chocolate**, the ride at the end and the 4D cinema. We were pleased to hear that pupils learnt a variety of things: how to tempter chocolate (cooling down the chocolate), heard about the Fairtrade of chocolate and learnt about the history of the Cadbury company.

Then ,the value for money. Surprisingly, they all rated it a 10/10 for value, which we didn’t expect as due to the location, and the fact it’s Cadbury World, we would’ve expected it to be expensive. However, for 10 Curly-Wurlys it cost just under £2!

Next, we asked if they would go again on their own and unsurprisingly they all replied “Yes!”.

Based on everything we’ve heard, we agree that it is a 10/10 experience. I think it’s safe to say that this trip was surely a fun one for all who went on it!



BOOK REVIEW

SOLITAIRE BY ALICE OSEMAN

Solitaire is a YA book which follows Charlie from *Heartstopper's* sister, Tori Springs, as she's progressing through high school as a pessimist.

Throughout the novel we are shown the up-rise of a group of young pranksters who are causing trouble. As their actions are growing more and more dangerous, Tori assists a peculiar year 13 student called Michael Holden to investigate the group.

Solitaire is a rather slow book to begin with, but persevere, as the story develops it really gets you hooked. Personally, I would say that Alice Oseman does a fantastic job at portraying what it is like to go through life with a mental illness, which you don't understand, or are yet to have been diagnosed with. It really outlines clearly how important it is to check the mental health of everyone around you (as well as yourself).

Unexpectedly, it ends with a winter romance (perfect for any romantics out there). It truly makes the book wonderful. If you enjoyed the *Heartstopper* series I would recommend this to you as it also includes well-loved characters Charlie and Nick.

Overall I would say it is a solid 4/5 rating.



NEXT SUMMER'S SCHOOL MUSICAL: GREASE



On the 10th October, students auditioned for parts in the upcoming musical, 'Grease'. With over forty people auditioning, this year's school musical is bound to be a performance you'll never forget.

Mrs Pegg, the assistant musical director, stated that "the auditions were very strong; very enthusiastic. We were so glad so many people decided to become involved."

A week later - after hours of discussion - the Performing Arts Team made their final decisions and the cast list was revealed to the hopeful students on the 23rd October. "The auditions were lovely; they gave opportunities for students to show off their skills. It was a very tough decision," reported Miss Street (the director and visual designer for the upcoming Grease performance).

As of today, the rehearsals are going extremely well, and students are incredibly passionate about their performance.

Meanwhile, the backstage crew, led by Mrs Davenport, are tirelessly working on the props for the musical (such as the car used in one of the most famous songs *Grease Lightening*) the costume designs, lighting and almost everything that the play may need. In addition to this, Miss Gillings, who runs the textiles club, will be making skirts for the production with her group of year nines and tens.

Next summer at St George, the drama department will be presenting Grease on the 18th-19th June. Make sure to keep these dates free and listen out for further announcements regarding how you can get your tickets to see this incredible production and support the wonderful students taking part.

(Photo top left Grease Cast, photo bottom right Grease Stage Crew).



SAINT GEORGE NETBALL TEAM

The netball girls' team is a passionate and hardworking group that truly enjoys playing the sport. They thrive on teamwork, the competitive nature of matches and the excitement of attacking and shooting plays.

While their interest in netball hasn't changed their views on other sports, it has had a big impact on their personal lives and time at school. Playing the game has helped them build confidence, develop strategic thinking and improve teamwork skills.

Each player takes on positions that suit their strengths, such as centre or wing attack, allowing them to perform well and support the team effectively.

A recent 7-9 victory shows their dedication and determination to succeed. The team values both attacking and defending styles of play, always striving to improve and work together. Their love for the game and their bond as a team make them not only successful on the court but also stronger as individuals.

“Playing the game has helped them build confidence, develop strategic thinking and improve teamwork skills.”

YEAR 7 BOYS DO SAINT GEORGE PROUD!

On Monday the 18th November, 14 year 7 boys went to a rugby festival at Portsmouth Rugby club to represent St. George. The boys went with the aim of practicing and improving their rugby skills. Playing at a tournament alongside 16 other schools, the tournament was split into morning and afternoon leagues.

In the morning session, the boys managed to go unbeaten with 3 draws and 2 wins finishing in 2nd place.

After a quick lunch, the boys battled hard during the afternoon to win 2, draw 1 and lose 1, finishing overall 1st. The boys did really well to keep fighting after two injuries to their teammates during the afternoon.

The boys went back to St George proud. They were grateful to Mr Gillard for taking them on this trip which was a great experience for all involved!



CELEBRATING CHRISTMAS AROUND THE WORLD

Feliz Navidad! Buon Natale! Merry Christmas! As we know, in Saint George there are many cultures around our school, meaning we have different Christmas celebrations. So, let's take an opportunity to educate ourselves on the different ways people celebrate Christmas around the world.



Portugal

- * They open presents on the 24th of December, but they can also open presents on the 25th
- * They open presents after dinner/midnight if it's on 24th
- * On Christmas eve they eat codfish and on Christmas they eat turkey and lamb, but it depends what part you are from
- * They usually have a lot of desserts and the most famous one they have is Bolo Rei

Poland

- * 6th December they have Mikolajki where children get presents from "Maly Mikolaj" often found in a shoe or a fireplace.
- * Jaselka (Nativity plays).
- * Kolaċja Wigilna, 12 dishes.
- * Merry Christmas in polish is Wesolych Swiat.

Japan

- * Known more as a time to spread happiness rather than a religious celebration, Christmas eve is thought of as romantic.
- * Fried chicken is often eaten on Christmas eve/day, n Japanese Happy/Merry Christmas is "Meri Kurisumasu"
- * Santa Claus is known as Santa-san or Santa-Kurosu

Ecuador

- * Christmas usually starts on the 16th instead of the 25th
- * Most houses in Ecuador will be decorated with a Nativity Scene called a pesebre, however the figure of baby Jesus isn't put until the evening of Christmas eve
- * A special Christmas parade called "El Pase del Nino Viajero" takes place
- * Santa Claus is known as Papa Noel
- * Many Ecuadorians will go for midnight /early evening mass
- * Merry Christmas is either Feliz Navidad or Paqariku Atawasmi

Italy

- * World famous for their nativity scenes
- * No meat, and sometimes no dairy, is eaten on Christmas Eve
- * The 1983 comedy film "Trading Places" is always shown on Italian TV
- * Seven fish dishes are eaten
- * Some families have a "Ceppo" or Yule Log which is burnt through the Christmas season
- * In Italian Happy/Merry Christmas is "Buon Natale"

FAREWELL INTERVIEWS WITH MR STAGPOOL AND MISS KEATING

Recently, we interviewed the fantastic Miss Keating, who will sadly be departing from Saint George on New Year's with Mr. Stagpool to Australia, to find out about her experiences as a teacher at our fantastic school.

We asked 6 questions we considered important in understanding her experience.

Q: How long have you been at Saint George?

I must say a little bit over two years, this would've been my third next term.

Q: What is/was your favourite part of Saint George?

Probably meeting my Tutor Group when they were in year 7, meeting all my new friends and I generally just enjoyed teaching.

Q: Out of the three subjects that you teach (Photography, Art, D.T.), which one is your favourite?

I love to teach art over the other ones, but personally I preferred setting up the photography course to the other!

Q: What is your favourite memory from Saint George?

It must be the Summer Art Evenings ... I recommend going to them! Another favourite memory must also be the year 7 camps.

Q: Any messages for anyone reading?

Remember to always stay creative ... and make sure to thank your teachers!

Q: Anyone you would like to shout out?

Miss Fisher, Miss Street, Miss Templeman, Miss Smith and 9 Romero!

“Live life to the fullest, see the world, be kind and always smile.” Mr Stagpool

This is **Quick Q&A** with Mr Stagpool, a business teacher and tutor in St George's. We are interviewing him about his time at St George as he is sadly leaving us for pastures new in Australia.

Q: How has working at St George's affected your life?

It has been lovely to meet students, this has helped me grow and develop as a teacher and this job has given me a new insight into religion.

Q: What are 3 things you will miss most about St. George?

His tutor group (9 Frassati), the Students and Mrs Smallwood.

Q: What was it like to make the decision to move so far away?

It was scary and exciting, but it was something I've always wanted to do, but I'll definitely miss you lot, however I was worried to tell people, especially my tutor group!

Q: What is your message to everyone?

Live life to the fullest, see the world, be kind and always smile.

Q: What is your favourite part of teaching?

It's almost like a bit of a performance, but I love having a laugh and a bit of fun.

He wishes us good luck in the newspaper team and hopes everyone has a good Christmas.

We would like to wish well once again to Miss Keating and Mr. Stagpool, as they will be missed, and wish them much luck for when they go to Australia.

DEALING WITH EXAM STRESS

Exams at school are inevitable, and we all know that exams can be stressful. I'm here to remind you that, as hard as it may be, you don't have to let anxiety take over.

Whether you're cramming last-minute or feeling overwhelmed by the sheer weight of upcoming tests, these tips will help you manage stress, perform your best and stay calm.

- ⇒ **Start with deep breaths** - It might sound simple, but keep breathing is one of the most effective ways to reduce immediate stress.
- ⇒ **Creating a study schedule** - A lack of organisation can fuel stress. Create a study plan that breaks down your material into manageable chunks.
- ⇒ **Prioritise your health** - Sleep, nutrition and exercise are your secret weapons. A tired, hungry or sedentary body won't perform at its best. Aim for at least 7-8 hours of sleep, eat balanced meals, and try to incorporate physical activity into everyday day.
- ⇒ **Practice mindfulness and meditation** – I know what you might be thinking “Very mindful, very cutesy, very demure”. Stress often comes from worrying about things that might not even happen, regular mindfulness practices -like focusing on the present moment or practicing meditation – can be really help you focus and calm down. There are loads of free mindfulness and guided meditation videos on YouTube. Even a couple of minutes a day has been proven to seriously improve mental health.
- ⇒ **Use active recall and space repetition** - Instead of cramming all at once use **active recall**: testing yourself on what you've learned and **spaced repetition**: this involves reviewing material over increasing intervals. Start with every day, then move to every couple of days, every week and so on until you can recall something two weeks after you last looked at it.
- ⇒ **Avoid negative self-talk** - Negative thoughts like “I'm going to fail” or “I'm not prepared enough” can worsen stress. Try to replace these with positive affirmations like “I've studied so hard and I'm doing my best”, this can really help boost your self-esteem.
- ⇒ **Take breaks** - Focused study sessions are key, but you need to take regular breaks to refresh your mind. However, if you study without a break your brain won't develop as much information as it would if it had a break every 25 minutes.
- ⇒ **Limit social media and distractions** - Social media can be a huge source of stress and distraction. Set specific times for checking your phone.
- ⇒ **Talk it out** - If the pressure feels unbearable talk to someone you trust -whether it's a friend, family member or a teacher. Sometimes, just verbalising your concerns can make them seem less overwhelming. Plus, others might have helpful advice or encouragement that can shift your perspective.

Remember that you are not alone! Everyone will/has experienced this. Exams are important, but they don't define your worth of potential. Stay calm and keep your mind clear. Your hard work will shine through. Best of luck!



CHRISTMAS PRAYER, BY VERONICA KIVER

Dear Lord,
Thank you for sending your son Jesus
as an incredible gift for us this Christ-
mas time. Keep everyone safe and
healthy as the weather gets colder.
Bless everyone's families whether
they're together or apart and remind
everyone of the true meaning of
Christmas.
Amen.

CHRISTMAS INTERVIEWS WITH TEACHERS AT SAINT GEORGE

Over to some Christmas themed interviews, when our reporter Ry-lee Jones interviewed three teachers - Mrs. Cameron, Mrs. Lee-Can and Mrs. Knight. The festive three are all getting ready for the Christmas season. Here's what they had to say:

Q1: Have you put up your Christmas tree yet?

Mrs. Cameron – Yes, I have.

Mrs. Lee-Can - Not yet, I was going to do it last weekend but there is still some tidying to do.

Mrs. Knight - Yes.

Q2: When do you start decorating or feeling the Christmas spirit?

Mrs. Cameron - For me it's the 1st of December.

Mrs. Lee-can - Around now/mid-December

Mrs. Knight - The end of November.



Q3: Do you have any plans for the upcoming holidays and Christmas?

Mrs. Cameron – Well, I'm going to spend time with my family. I happen to have some everywhere in Essex, Oxford and Milton Keynes!

Mrs. Lee-can - I'm going to spend some time with my immediate family, before visiting my mom in Wales!

Mrs. Knight - I am going to a Mass on Christmas Eve!

Lastly, I asked them whether they were excited for Christmas and all 3 of them gave me a very confident "Yes!"

Here's to a very merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all our wonderful St George family!

Puzzle Page

Merry Word Search: A Festive Challenge!

Get ready for the holidays with our fun word search! Jump into a snowy world and look for the names of Santa's helpful reindeer. Can you find them all 9 before Christmas Eve?

Cheerful challenge: find Santa Claus real name!

R	O	H	X	S	I	V	I	X	E	N	C	H	E
R	C	B	N	V	U	C	D	R	V	C	C	A	C
D	A	N	C	E	R	O	P	B	I	H	N	E	N
H	N	T	C	C	I	M	V	D	E	E	I	S	I
O	N	S	U	A	P	E	R	P	A	V	N	U	R
R	R	Z	P	D	O	T	R	E	C	N	A	R	P
N	U	T	I	A	A	D	N	R	R	D	E	H	D
E	D	T	D	S	R	O	I	E	I	S	R	E	T
Z	O	D	E	H	P	N	C	L	I	V	B	H	P
T	L	C	N	E	N	N	H	H	P	R	O	E	R
I	P	R	E	R	I	E	O	M	E	D	S	E	Z
L	H	H	N	N	H	R	L	R	I	L	C	N	I
B	N	C	N	X	D	E	A	E	L	I	C	O	T
D	I	E	R	N	U	S	S	L	L	A	P	R	I

CHRISTMAS WORDSEARCH

W	E	S	U	P	L	Y	J	J	D	G	A	B	O	R
E	E	R	T	M	H	N	O	E	L	L	D	F	B	H
A	S	T	A	R	T	S	A	L	O	H	X	R	K	L
K	H	N	M	O	E	P	B	M	G	N	U	W	T	C
Q	E	V	E	P	N	V	D	C	R	W	F	I	S	Q
S	P	R	H	C	H	R	I	S	T	M	A	S	I	Z
T	H	V	E	A	N	Z	J	D	O	B	S	E	R	B
L	E	R	L	T	F	I	Y	M	K	T	E	M	H	X
U	R	D	H	M	U	V	K	R	S	D	L	E	C	A
F	D	N	T	D	L	O	E	N	T	J	C	N	S	U
B	X	W	E	E	Q	G	X	M	A	R	Y	P	U	M
F	T	Y	B	S	N	U	R	H	B	R	W	O	S	V
D	U	M	G	A	Z	V	T	N	L	B	F	D	E	N
P	Y	O	M	Y	R	R	H	L	E	G	N	A	J	L
N	D	O	N	K	E	Y	U	T	P	W	R	X	F	S

- ANGEL
- BETHLEHEM
- CHRISTMAS
- DONKEY
- FRANKINCENSE
- GOLD
- JESUS CHRIST
- JOSEPH
- MANGER
- MARY
- MYRRH
- NOEL
- SHEPHERD
- STABLE
- STAR
- TREE
- WISE MEN

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**SAINT GEORGE
CATHOLIC COLLEGE**

Leaside Way, Southampton, SO16 3DQ
Tel: 02380 322603 www.stgcc.co.uk

"There is a highly aspirational culture where pupils want to work hard and achieve well"

"Expectations for behaviour are extremely high and pupils live up to these"

"The school is 'one big family'"

"This is a truly inclusive and welcoming school"

Ofsted
Outstanding
Provider

 @saintgeorgecc

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At St George we Aspire to become all that God created us to be