



THE COMPANION



Important Dates:

January

Mon 6 th	INSET day
Tues 7 th	1 st day of term
Thurs 9 th	Yr11 6 th Form taster day & Yr11 parents' evening
Tues 29 th	Yr11 6 th Form interviews
Thurs 30 th	6 th Form parents' evening

February

17 th -21 st	Half Term
Wed 26 th	Yr8 options taster day

March

Wed 5 th	Ash Wednesday
Thurs 13 th	Yr9 parents' evening
Thurs 27 th	Yr8 academic review day/ options interview
Fri 28 th	Spring report to parents

April

Wed 2 nd	Headmaster's lunch
Fri 4 th	Last day of term

**Summer Term begins on
Tuesday 22nd April**

We support the Euston Foodbank. Our next collection for the Euston Foodbank will be on Ash Wednesday (5th March)



Message from the Headmaster

Welcome to another edition of *The Companion*, our termly school newsletter. This term we celebrated fifty years of Maria Fidelis, when St Aloysius Grammar School and St Vincent's Secondary School merged to become one. As part of the celebration, all year groups went on retreat to Aylesford Priory in Kent and we had a special 'day of happiness' to mark the occasion on 20th September. Our next big event will be in 2030, when we celebrate the bicentenary of the school, which was first established by Marie Madeleine D'Houet in 1830.

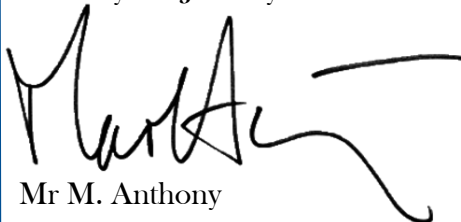
We have had a lot to celebrate this term, with one of our 6th Formers—Sebastian—being our first student getting into Oxford to study medicine; a number of students being nominated for Jack Petchey awards and attending the annual ceremony; students competing in a range of House activities and the introduction of our new fantastic marimba band.

I would like to congratulate all the students who were chosen by staff to attend the Headmaster's lunch this term. They were chosen because of the way they exemplify our FCJ values and put them into practice through their kindness to others and desire to do the best they can at school.

Finally, I would like to thank our governors and staff for their hard work and dedication to this school. We are incredibly lucky to have so many people who are committed to making sure that the children in our care get the very best education in the very best environment.

It is with great gratitude for her contribution to our school, that we say goodbye to Ms Matthews Martin. She has been a fantastic support for many of our students and a dedicated member of the Maths department. We wish her the best of luck in her new school.

I wish you all a happy and blessed Christmas and I hope you have a prosperous 2025. I look forward to welcoming our students back on Tuesday 7th January.



Mr M. Anthony
Headmaster



St Aloysius Convent School painted by Mr Aldridge



FOCUS ON: XLP

XLP stands for "The eXceL Project", a charity at the cutting edge of London's youth work. Their youth workers come to Maria Fidelis every week and have been doing so for nearly ten years, helping hundreds of our students since they started. They are a Christian charity and describe themselves as "faith based, but not faith biased". At Maria Fidelis, they work with a wide range of our students.

Rosie and her team work to build positive, long-term relationships and they encourage students to set positive goals and work hard to achieve them. We are lucky to have XLP staff who relate well with our students, bringing with them a wealth of skills and experience. Rosie established XLP at Maria Fidelis and she is passionate about improving opportunities for young people and she understands the challenges and the issues young people face. The XLP team aim to put the power back into the hands of young people so they can have the future they want, not the future dictated to them.

They run two programmes at the school, one is focused on keeping young people motivated in education and happens in schools throughout the day; the other supports young people outside of school hours. Rosie and her team offer a range of interventions including mentoring, sports clubs, sports clubs, music production and even taking roles within the organisation itself. They have also run their Literacy and Numeracy project (LAN) with some of our students; this offers literacy and numeracy support



XLP Camps

Last term, Maria Fidelis students in the XLP program had the opportunity to attend two amazing residential camps. These students had also been involved in the XMobile project, where they use their creativity to produce music in a mobile recording studio that came to the school each week.

The residential camps are designed to help students build stronger relationships with XLP staff and apply important skills such as resilience, patience, teamwork, and communication, which they develop during weekly group sessions at school. The camps also bring together students from other XLP schools and community projects across North London.



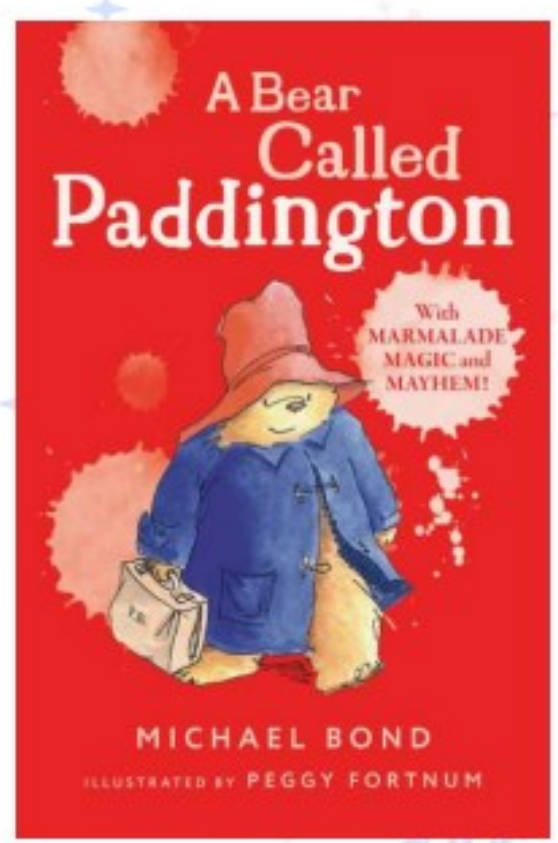
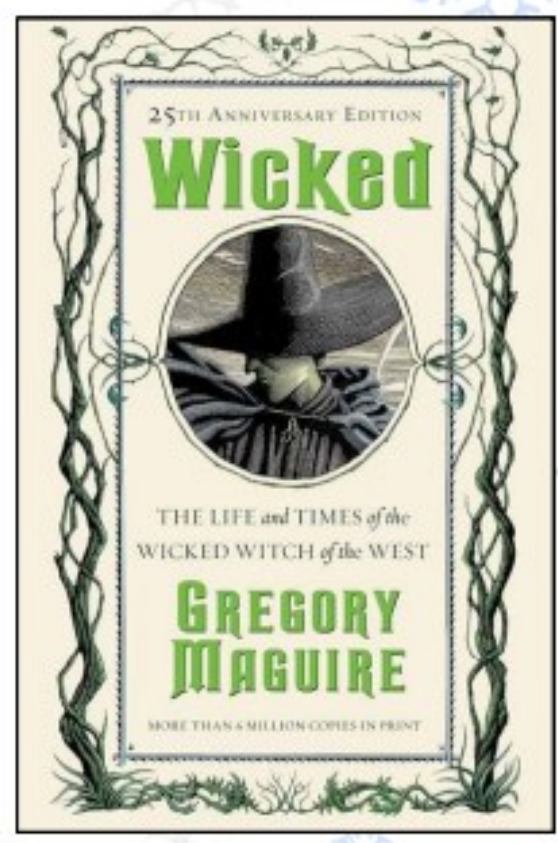
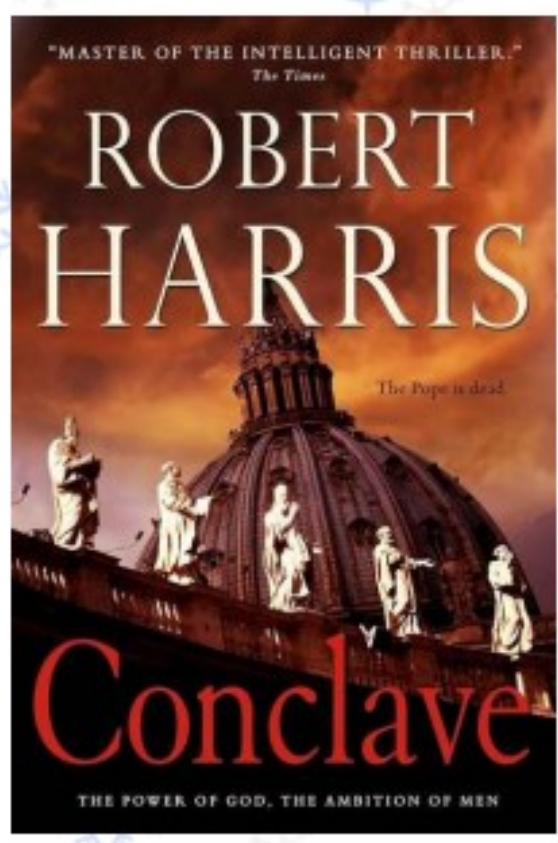
We are proud to share that the Maria Fidelis students represented their school with outstanding behaviour, making a positive impression on everyone. We look forward to continuing group sessions at Maria Fidelis this year!

XLP
WORKING TO CREATE POSITIVE
FUTURES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE





In cinemas this Christmas





Celebrating 50 years of Maria Fidelis

This September, we celebrated fifty years of Maria Fidelis, but our story goes back way beyond 1974; indeed, our story is nearly 200 years old.

Somers Town was named after Lord Somers from whom the land was leased, and was still situated among market gardens and meadows where hay-makers would be seen during summer months.

What we now know as Clarendon Court on the other side of Phoenix Rd was Clarendon Square and in its centre was the Polygon - a circle of thirty-two linked houses built around an inner garden in the centre of Clarendon Square, designed by a French architect, Jacob Leroux, who himself resided nearby. It was here that a French priest called Abbé Carron set up a chapel and number of schools locally, including a boarding school for girls, and this boarding school was the nucleus of Saint Aloysius Secondary School.



In 1814, he handed over the school to his colleague, the Abbé Nerinckx, who oversaw the school from 1814 until 1830. Marie Madeleine D’Houet arrived in Somers Town in 1830 bringing with her a note of introduction to Father Nerinckx. Within five days the girls’ school, with all its contents, was handed over to the FCJ sisters. Marie Madeleine assumed responsibility for the educational establishment that was then known as St. Aloysius’ Charity School for Girls.

In September, 1974, St Aloysius merged with St Vincent’s Secondary School which was run by the Sisters of Charity, and that was when Maria Fidelis was established.

The name Maria Fidelis was chosen because of the devotion of both religious congregations to Our Lady. Mary was faithful to her son, Jesus, right to the foot of the cross, and the motto of our school is just one word ‘Fidelity’.

The first headteacher of Maria Fidelis Convent School was Sr Placida Hoole FCJ. She and her successors led the school in educating girls from north London for nearly forty years until 2013, when it became co-educational.

It has changed a great deal since 1974, but we remain true to our values and it is still undoubtedly an FCJ school. In 2019, we closed the doors to North Gower Street and Phoenix Road, and opened the doors to our current new building on Drummond Crescent.



And this is where we are now - nearly 200 years after Marie Madeleine D’Houet established the first school, and 50 years after two schools amalgamated to form Maria Fidelis. We still have our shared vision underpinned by the six FCJ values

- DIGNITY
- EXCELLENCE
- HOPE
- JUSTICE
- COMPANIONSHIP
- GENTLENESS

We are hugely indebted to the staff, governors and students who have contributed to the school over the decades. Any current success would not have been achieved were it not for who and what has gone before. It is down to us to lay foundations anew for the future generations to keep the story, the story of our Faith, alive.

Celebrating 50 years of Maria Fidelis



Sr Brenda unveiling a portrait of the old school building



Bishop Hudson with Mr Anthony, Ms Whelan and Chelson (head boy)



Sr Anouska and Sr Gloria



Ms Hodey (teacher and former student) with some of her classmates



Bishop Hudson with Ms Whelan and student ambassadors



Ms Gamble with Mary-Claire Hogan and Anne Smith (previous teachers at the school)

Team Up Literacy Programme

Team Up is part of Reading Voluntary Action, an organization that aims to increase opportunities for children in the UK. External tutors delivered interactive, fun and engaging sessions in order for pupils to develop communication, leadership, and teamwork skills.



The literacy programme took place on Wednesdays P4 in our library and lasted for 11 weeks.

A group of Year 8 pupils attended a new literacy programme called Team up (<https://teamup.org.uk/schools>) where external tutors delivered literacy lessons.

Pupils also received a professional mentor!

Tutors were impressed by the outstanding behaviour and commitment of our Year 8 pupils!



Year 10 Outwards Bounds Day



In recognition of the 50th year anniversary of Maria Fidelis, on the 20th September, Year 10 had the exciting opportunity to visit Scout Adventures, Gilwell Park to participate in various outdoor activities. Sessions were organised to challenge them, building key skills such as confidence, leadership and teamwork whilst having fun. By the end, students left with a stronger sense of community and a boost in personal growth. It was a memorable experience that marked a special year in the school's history, and Year 10 students certainly made the most of this unique opportunity!



Remembrance Day



At 11:00am on the 11th November, the whole school honoured the two-minute silence to remember those who have lost their lives in war over the years. Year 11 and Year 8 students participated in a Remembrance Day Service in the central lobby area of the school; this included readings, prayers and poetry; the music department also played *The Last Post*. The service was also

attended by Sr Brenda fcJ and Ms Carey, our chair of governors. Students were dignified and solemn, and it was a very moving occasion.

During the month of November our school chaplain Anna Prasek invited students into the chapel to pray for those who have died.

The 'All Souls Group' pray for deceased family members and friends. Students also have an opportunity to write their names on a prayer leaf and in a Remembrance Book.

The aim of this group is to show students that they can implement prayer in their daily life and that they can have a beautiful and real relationship with God. Mass is then offered for the names in the Remembrance Book.

**They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.**



Student Voice

In his role as pastoral deputy, Mr McLoughlin meets with students to get their views on the school. He was very impressed by their ability to speak eloquently and with confidence about what they feel are the strengths of the school, as well as what they would like to see improved.

Students were asked what their favourite subjects were and why, and pleasingly gave a range of options - PE (the enjoyment of sport and the point of difference from other subjects), Maths (the enjoyment of the challenge, and the fact the teacher is so good that it is easy!), Classical Civilisation (the enjoyment of learning from the past and the mythological aspects), Sociology (learning a complete new way of seeing the world), History (the importance of learning and the past to inform the future), RE (the world we live in now needs understanding our similarities more than ever), Art (the absolute freedom of expression makes students lose themselves in their work).

Students then went on to discuss what teachers did well at Maria Fidelis. The group all agreed that their teachers have high expectations of their behaviour, and that the learning environment was much better and more progress was made.

Teachers have high expectations of behaviour

Students also agreed that their teachers go over and above to help them prepare for tests and assessments - they are given all the resources they need to do well.

Finally, where there was strong agreement was on the fact that their teachers were friendly and approachable. Some students said that teachers were highly skilled at 'chunking' ideas, breaking down complex concepts and ideas into more understandable content.

When asked about what the defining factors of a great lesson are, students said that they made the best progress when teachers were clear and concise in their instructions and explanations. They also agreed that great lessons were engaging - fast paced and with a range of activities. There was also widespread agreement that where teachers checked for understanding frequently, they were able to maintain the information and make progress.

There was a suggestion that teachers treating double periods as 2 separate lessons might help, and certainly giving a brain/movement break in between would help. They also liked the changes that have been made to the lunch queuing system - they commented it was now well ordered and fairer.

Teachers go over and above to help them prepare for tests and assess-

Our new student newspaper

Fidelis Today

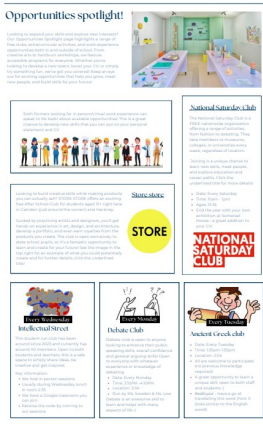
We are very proud of our new student-led newspaper, which was set up to give students a voice and a platform to express their ideas, creativity, and talents.

The paper covers events both in and out of school, and lets students know what future events are being planned and when they are taking place.

Fidelis Today covers everything that matters to our students from school events and sports, to opinion pieces, creative writing, and even humour columns. We are particularly proud of the fact that this newspaper is entirely student-written, so this paper truly reflects the spirit of our school.



The newspaper team are dedicated to helping all students navigate their way through school and provide information about the wealth of free clubs, extracurricular activities, and work experience opportunities both in and outside of school that students can take advantage of. From creative arts to hands-on workshops, the paper shares details of programmes for everyone.



The publishing team are always looking for new members and submissions.

To submit a piece of work, whether it's a story, artwork, or even photography, any student can email what they have produced to ahrnesl62l@mfcscamden.school.

Any student who is interested in writing articles or being on the newspaper team can also go to the open area on the second floor on any Wednesday. No experience required!

Prizegiving

This annual celebration of our students' achievements was held on Thursday 14th November. Mr Anthony complimented the staff on their commitment to ensuring that students at Maria Fidelis get a wealth of opportunities to get involved in a wide range of activities through the school.

He thanked the Heads of House for the work they have done over the year, and he congratulated Ms Weaver for bringing the *Antlers* back to Guillemet House. She is a dedicated member of staff, always willing to give her time to supporting and promoting house events and competitions, and her enthusiasm clearly paid off, giving the students in Guillemet House the motivation and encouragement they needed to win the overall competition.



Amongst the many prize-winners were Luis Marku - Young Theologian of the Year, Illias Zghoundi - Sports Personality of the Year, Peaches Perea Bartley-Egonu - Young Writer of the Year, Auden Singh-Hall - Young Musician of the Year, Sean Wilson-Thomas - Young Artist of the Year, and Alessandra Tadros - Young Scientist of the Year. A special mention should go to Tara Goulde and Esther Bamgbose, who were recognised for their contribution to school life. Both have been excellent role-models for other students, helping staff on a daily basis and making the school environment a better place for all. Well done to all our prize-winners!



Creative Dimensions Trust

The Creative Dimension Trust offers a variety of free, immersive workshops for students aged 14-19, covering hands-on crafts such as leatherwork, furniture making, perfume creation, and patisserie.

The workshops, led by craft specialists, provide a unique chance to develop specialised skills and gain confidence through learning and experimentation.

While workshops typically run during holidays and weekends, there will be special after-school workshops for Maria Fidelis students—contact Miss Gamble for more details!



These workshops equip students with valuable skills like hand-eye coordination and 3D construction, which are crucial for careers in fields like architecture, engineering, design, and even surgery. The Creative Dimension Trust's mission is to inspire talented young people and fill the gap in arts and crafts education, which is often overlooked in schools.

tod THEATRE OF DEBATE

On October 2nd, the Science Dept arranged for students in Years 10 and 11 to have the opportunity to watch a compelling performance by The Theatre of Debate, a company that aims to enhance debating skills in students, while fostering a greater awareness of global issues.

Before the play began, students participated in a voting exercise on a series of complex questions primarily related to health issues.

These included:

- Would a famous person convince you to receive an injection for an infectious disease?
- Who should be responsible for informing the public about vaccines?
- Should vaccination be mandatory for everyone?



These questions encouraged students to reflect on their own opinions and perspectives on medical issues, enhancing their critical thinking skills. Similar questions were posed again at the end of the play to gauge any shifts in opinion.

The performance incorporated the themes of students' initial votes while raising broader questions about how and why certain individuals should be remembered. It specifically focused on the historical event of the smallpox epidemic in India and the story of the three queens of Mysore. This narrative prompted ethical questions about international relations, particularly regarding Britain and India. Key historical figures referenced included the Devajammani sisters (the king's wives), Krishnaraja Wadiyar III (the king of South India), and Thomas Hickey (the artist who created the painting depicting the three women used to promote vaccination).



This performance provided an inspirational opportunity for students to delve deeper into their thoughts and confront challenging questions.

Additionally, it encouraged them to appreciate the history of other countries, especially relevant as we entered Black History Month (BHM). The experience may have also influenced some students' future aspirations, sparking a greater interest in acting. -A painting used to promote participation of vaccines in South India during the Small Pox epidemic Lana, a Year 10 student, shared her thoughts on the performance, noting some pros and cons. Among the positives, she highlighted its unique style, the intriguing story that most had never heard, and the humour of the actors.

Overall, the experience was enriching, engaging students intellectually and preparing them for the future.

KARL NOVA

We were very honoured to have award-winning author and poet Karl Nova visit our school and deliver poetry masterclasses for our students. It was a successful event and students who made the most effort received as a gift one of his books signed by the poet.

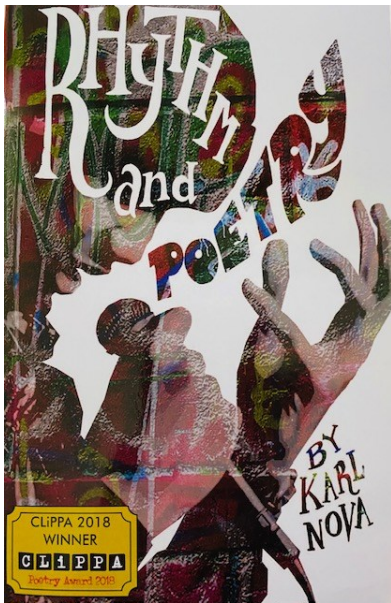


Amela, 7A

It was an amazing experience, and I really enjoyed the poetry workshop with Karl Nova. I learnt a wide range of poetic techniques and how to use them in my own poems. As a result, I feel more confident to write my own Rap songs and stories.

Sofia, 8C

I enjoyed the poetry workshop because it was engaging and informative. I learned a lot about rap's origin, and I even won a free book with Karl Nova's personalized signature.



All the activities were interesting, but what I liked mostly was the alliteration exercise where we tried to write our own poem using words with the same letter. I would like to thank Ms Michaels for organising it and hopefully we will have the opportunity to do more creative tasks like this.

Alfred, 9L

On Wednesday 11th December, I attended an interesting poetry workshop with Karl Nova. We shared opinions on different rap songs to break the ice. We learned how Rap is a form of poetry, and we also had the chance to write our own poems. At the end, Karl Nova signed and distributed his books to pupils who wrote the most fascinating poems. I had a pleasant time, and I learnt a lot about techniques and useful tips to write my own poems in the future.

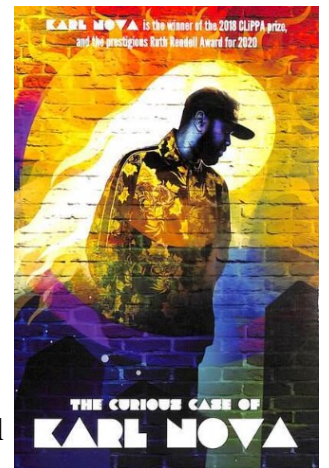


Suhail, 10A

I was delighted to take part in this captivating poetry workshop with Karl Nova. I learnt new facts such as the meaning of the acronym RAP - Rhythm and Poetry and Karl Nova's opinion on current Rap artists. It was inspirational to learn about his childhood and his hard work to become a poet. The best part: I was rewarded for my contribution to the whole group discussion with one of his books!

Aaliyah, 8W

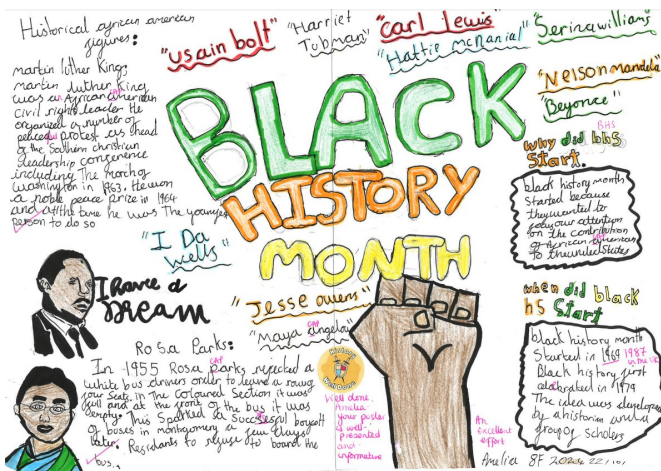
The poetry workshop was very entertaining! I now know how to make a short, interesting and eye-catching poem within 3 minutes. Karl Nova, the poet, made the workshop 10 times better by adding hilarious facts about Rap music and how nursery rhymes started off as short stories. He gave an inspiring speech about his story to success and how we shouldn't give up on our dreams and plans for the future. I loved how he also gave out his books with his signature and a simple message of thanks. Overall, the workshop was enjoyable, motivational, and thought-provoking.



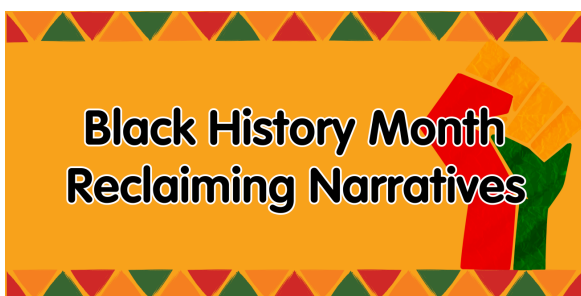
Black History Month

The aim of this year's theme is encourage our students to take on the role of storytellers, historians, and custodians of their heritage. But *Reclaiming Narratives* is more than just a theme—it's an invitation to take part in shaping how our stories are told. It's about ensuring that our students' voices are heard, their experiences acknowledged, and their contributions celebrated. This theme encourages us to shine a spotlight on the untold stories, the unsung heroes, and the everyday individuals who have had a huge impact on our community.

Reclaiming Narratives offers a fresh perspective on Black history that goes beyond the traditional focus on slavery and civil rights. It's about celebrating Black excellence in all its forms—whether in the arts, sciences, politics, or everyday life. This theme offers a platform for all of us to engage young minds in a way that is both meaningful and empowering. Black History Month 2024 aimed to ensure that the history of our students is told with the respect, dignity, and accuracy it deserves.



KS3 History students created posters to celebrate black lives throughout history. Their task was to create a poster that included information on an individual or group of people of minority ethnic backgrounds, who changed history. They needed to show how their contribution to politics, sport, media or the arts changed the world.



Fred D'Agulor—Poet

There was also an opportunity for Sixth Formers to join a zoom conference with UCLA English professor and poet: Fred D'Agulor, whose poetry ties in with this year's BH M theme, *Reclaiming Narratives*. His poetry covers topics such as:

- BLM movement
- School shootings in America
- The living memory of the slave trade
- The experience of Black Americans

Overall, it was a brilliant opportunity to learn more about poetry and how it can impact people through the stories it shares!



Cultural Day

We celebrated our annual cultural day on Friday 10th October this year. The school was alive with vibrant colours and students and staff brought in traditional food for a shared table organised by 6th Form students. Students and staff dressed up in traditional clothing from across the world for School Culture Day, with outfits including: hanfu from China, agbada and buba from Nigeria, shalwar kameez, from Pakistan, Ie and fota, from Romania, Sari and Panjabi, from Bangladesh, kaftan and salvar, from Turkey



'Once you understand and appreciate other people's cultural backgrounds, then you can also connect with them more.'



Lithuanian šakotis—tree cake



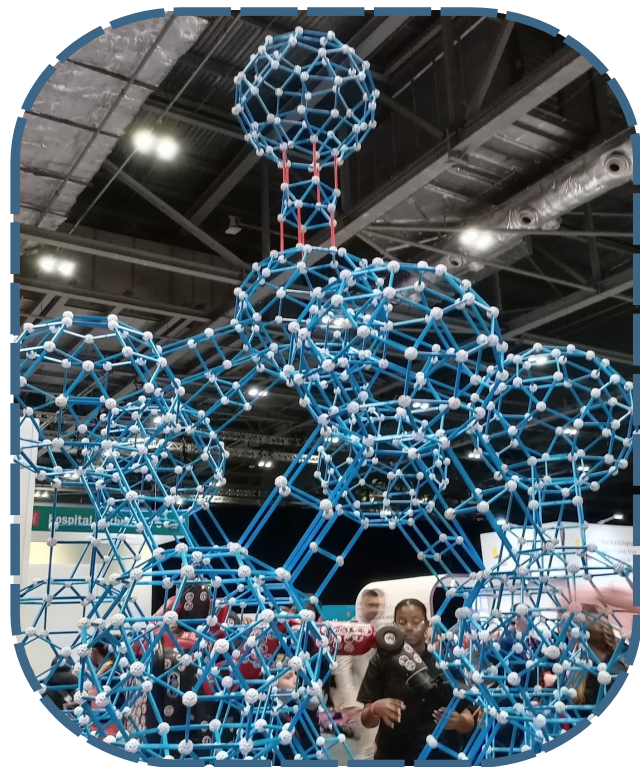
New Scientist Live



It was the 14th of October - while most people were expecting a normal, monotonous Monday at school, the Year 10 triple science class were given the exciting opportunity to attend the New Scientist Live conference at the ExCel centre!

Here's a summary of what happened.

Before the trip started, students still had to go to form time and period 1. Then, instead of going to their next lesson, they made their way to the canteen. After that, the rest of the day was spent on the trip.



Students were each given a map of the venue, a set of questions and timetable for when the talks were happening. (note: there's probably a 99% chance that no one actually did the questions,) After arriving to the venue by train, students were allowed to form groups of three and make their own way around.

There were over eighty different stalls to explore, each hosting either an activity or giving out free supplies (such as rulers, leaflets and pens) and a

number of live shows! The venue had four major stages and each was used to give a quick talk about a specific field and how it utilises science

The activities offered included competitions to test students' knowledge on science - some testing speed, others focusing on memory and problem solving. A few activities even involved using a microscope and being able to physically experience what it would be like to work in different areas of STEM.

Overall, the day was quite enjoyable for most students and everyone agreed they'd like to go again if possible! Special thanks to Miss Byford for organising the trip!

Written by Nazim Ahmed 10A





House Events

It has been an exciting term so far at Maria Fidelis with the House Competitions. Well done to Y7s, Y8s and Y9s for getting involved in Pumpkin Carving. We also had successful a basketball tournament for Years 7-10 and our annual Sponsored Walk was another success.

Pumpkin Carving Competition

As ever, this was a very popular event and students in Years 7 and 8 took part in a spooky evening of pumpkin carving to celebrate All Hallows Eve.



There were some really creative ideas. We had some fantastic designs and the students were very imaginative with their creations! It was lovely to see students working well in their teams and even lending a hand across the different year groups to help support their house.



Pumpkin carving competitors

Christmas Card Competition

Students from all year groups submitted entries for the Christmas card competition this year and the standard was probably the highest ever. Mr Aldridge and Ms Levin had a very difficult job judging the number and the quality of the entries but Raadi in

Year 13 was the overall winner, with Maya in Year 13 a close runner-up.

Eloise in Yr 7 and Bethany in Yr 8 also produced some wonderful work, which was included in our official Christmas cards for this year. The Art Department would like to thank everyone for taking part and making the competition such a success this year.



Basketball Tournament

Ms Weaver organised basketball matches for each year group and the matches were very competitive.



It was great to see students support their teams and for the players to compete in a very sporting manner. Well done also to those students who help referee the games and support Ms Weaver with the

organisation and running of the matches.

Current Standings:

- 1st D'Houet
- 2nd Guillemet
- 3rd Loyola
- 4th Faber

The competition for the Antlers is close and there is still everything to play for. Students get extra points for competing, so it is important to show support for your House!

New Head of House

Congratulations to Ms Kennedy, who will be taking over as Head of D'Houet House from January. She is very keen to see her students get fully involved and will be supporting them in every competition.

Next Competitions:

In the new half term, the Heads of House will be organising dodgeball and chess competitions. All are welcome—do get involved. If you would like to run other competitions. Let your Head of House know.

Nazim and Alina Speak Out!

In September, year 10 students were treated to a workshop for the Jack Petchey speak out challenge, which aimed to build young people's confidence in public speaking and making speeches.

Participating students were taught to build confidence through a range of fun interactive activities. For example, students were asked to get into groups of five and answer simple questions in the structure of a speech. One person would answer the question while the others listened and provided detailed feedback.

At every opportunity, students were able to learn and develop their speaking skills with just a few simple steps. They learnt that making a speech is not just about what you say but how you say it. The students were taught to stand confidently, make eye contact, relax and slow down as they made their speech. These techniques proved to be useful because the difference between every student's first speech and final speech was major.

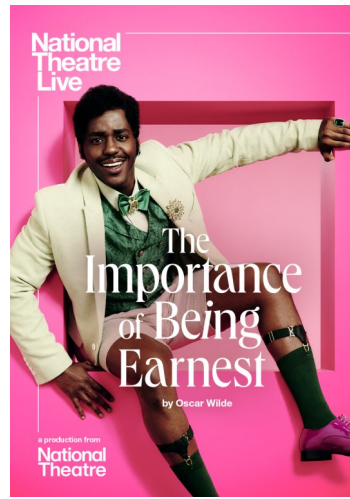
Everyone definitely seemed to be more comfortable with public speaking than before and some even wanted to be able to do similar activities in the future.

During the end of the workshop, there was a competition between the whole group to see who could make and perform the best speech. Although all contestants had amazing performances, only two were selected to represent the school at the regional finals. Well done to Nazim and Alina, who were finally chosen and performed excellently in the final!



Special thanks to Mr Durbin, Dr Murphy and Justin for this workshop, plus the others who helped and participated.

Jack Petchey's
"SPEAK OUT"
Challenge!



The English Dept took 25 year 10 students to see 'The Importance of Being Earnest' at the National Theatre. Being a central London school means we have access to so many incredible opportunities but too many of our students rarely get

the chance to access these due to the eye-watering costs that can act as a barrier to such enriching cultural experiences.

Max Webster, and his fantastic cast and crew have breathed new life into this classic, delivering a show that is both faithful to Wilde's original text, fresh in its interpretation and genuinely funny. For those that are unfamiliar with the play, 'The Importance of Being Earnest' is a classic Romantic comedy filled with mistaken identities, witty one-liners and a reassuring restoration of chaos at the end. But beyond that, it is an insight into Wilde's world and the absurdity of societal expectations and the rigid class system of 1895. Ncuti Gatwa (2024's Doctor Who) is iconic in his depiction of Algy, but this isn't to say he overshadows the remaining performances from Sharon D Clarke, Amanda Lawrence, Ronke Adékoluẹ́jọ́ and Hugh Skinner. It was a fantastic, vibrant spectacle that captivated the audience from start to finish.

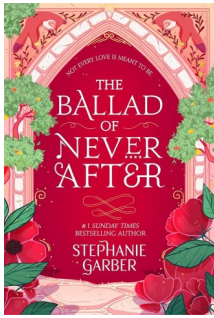
For many of our students, this was their first experience of the theatre and we are delighted they got to see a production of such high quality in every regard. Miss Michaels described it as "a masterpiece: it was a brilliant adaptation of the classic comedy from Oscar Wilde with excellent acting and fascinating props and costumes!" while Mr McReynolds stated that it was "Fabulously modern, effervescently funny and considerably refreshing." He went on to say it was "A feast for the eyes and an excellent opportunity for students to learn about society in the late 19th century."

As the curtain fell, I reflected back on the students that were a little tentative at the start: perhaps believing the theatre is not a space for them, or they may not understand it, or they might find it 'boring' but seeing their faces at the end as we were showered in colour and joy, I knew that I needn't be worried. I hope that this production may have sparked a fire and love of theatre in our students.

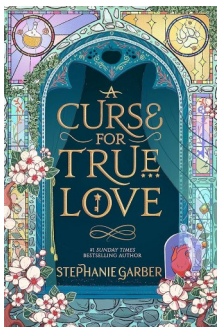


Recommended Reads...

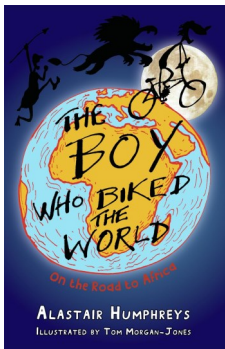
There are countless books available at our school - Annabelle John Ligali (9F) suggests the following books:



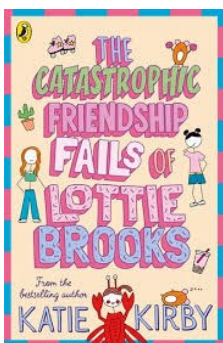
The Ballad of Never After
- Stephanie Garber



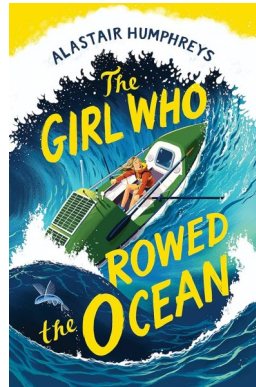
A Curse For True Love
- Stephanie Garber



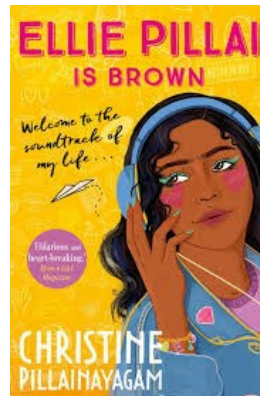
The Boy Who Biked The World
- Alastair Humphreys



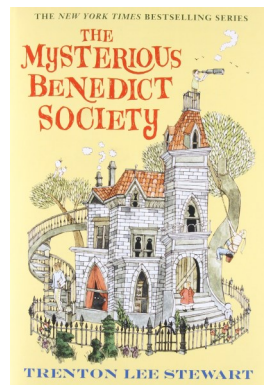
The Catastrophe Fails Of Friendship of Lottie Brooks
- Katie Kirby



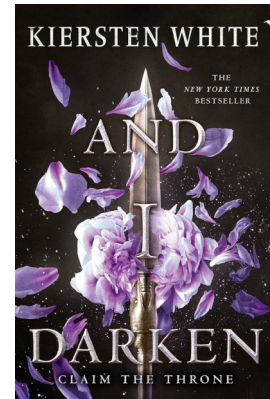
The Girl Who Rowed The Ocean
- Alastair Humphreys



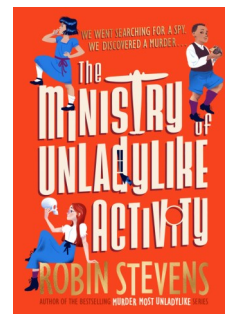
Ellie Pillai Is Brown
- Christine Pillai Mayagam



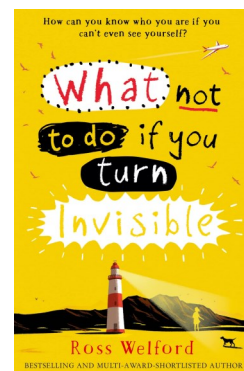
The Mysterious Benedict Society
- Trenton Lee Stewart



And I Darken
- Kristen White



The Ministry Of Unladylike Activity
- Robin Stevens



What Not To Do If You Turn Invisible
- Ross Welford

Jack Petchey Awards

Huge congratulations to our students who were nominated for a Jack Petchey Award. A number of our students attended the awards ceremony in November at the Shaw Theatre. It was a wonderful celebration of students who have been role models for others in school.

Amongst the winners were Nazim in Year 10, who has worked incredibly hard to create an inclusive club for students wishing to explore their intellectual interests. He created competitions and activities for this group of students and has shown remarkable leadership in his organisation and enthusiasm for learning.



Nazim is faultlessly kind and welcomes all students who are interested in joining his club. He has prepared and taught lessons on topics he has an interest in. He



has worked hard to promote a love of learning and to create a community which fosters intellectual curiosity.

Also recognised for her contribution was Olha in Year 9, who

demonstrated an outstanding work ethic and dedication in Art. She has regularly produced the most amazingly detailed pieces of Art homework and puts an incredible amount of time and effort into each piece. She is a polite and helpful student, who is always willing to support others in class.

Another outstanding ambassador for the school is Marigona, who carried out some excellent work with younger students as part of the mentoring programme.



Well done to all our winners!

Art Dept



The Art Department has continued to run a varied enrichment programme for students. Year 8s have been taking part in workshops on Creativity and the Future with renowned architects Thomas Heatherwick. You can view a video of students from Maria Fidelis and Mr Aldridge talking about the reasons for the project by following the link here.:
<https://heatherwick.com/studio/ideas/>

We are proud that this video has been viewed by many Architectural firms across the UK and is the starting point of a push to get businesses and Government more involved in developing creativity amongst young people.

KS4

GCSE students produced 2 banners in a short, intense 3-week project for Camden's 2024 Day of the Dead festival. This included work by Year 10's who produced textile skulls and work by the Year 9 BTEC group who produced Alebrijes (Mexican Spirit animals). Below are the final banners (brilliantly stitched together by our technician Sara Vestburg Thomas) and a detail of an embroidered skull by Riola from Year 10.

KS5

Year 13's took part in their first crit. This is a key part of teaching and learning at KS5. Students present their work and talk about their artistic journey and justifying their work and ideas for 15 minutes in front of four arts professionals. This is a very nerve-racking experience but a very useful event and prepares students for public speaking and crits that will happen at University. Visitors this year included a Professional Ceramic artist, our previous Head of Art Mike Fletcher and current students at Central St. Martins. Our 6th formers presented their work very well and were highly praised for their efforts.



6th Form News

6th Form Enhanced Curriculum Programme

Maddie Calkin, from Catch 22's 'The Hive', visited with her colleague to promote the free services available to our students. It is pleasing to hear reports that a number of our students are already taking advantage of these services.

Joe Sheerer from the Amy Winehouse Foundation came to deliver a session on the links between addiction and low self-worth. This assembly was very well received by the students.

Mr Coombes delivered an assembly on financial literacy, including different types of debt. Students really enjoyed this and Mr Coombes plans to deliver more assemblies of this nature.

FYA Peer Mentoring Training

21 sixth formers have begun peer mentoring training with Fitzrovia Youth in Action. The group will complete AQA accredited courses in mental health awareness, peer mentoring training and peer facilitation over the course of this half term. Once training is complete, they will be matched with students in Years 7 - 9 in need of support and will meet with their mentees once a week to offer guidance and a friendly face.

CAFOD Young Leaders Programme

Year 12 students from schools across dioceses in England and Wales were invited to take part in the Young Leaders Programme. The programme is a great opportunity for driving global justice action in schools and is also a great CV-builder for participants, who will receive a certificate of volunteering and leadership at the end of the programme. The programme consists of three training days focused on developing leadership skills such as planning, influencing others, problem-solving, time management and communication.

Founder's Day

We celebrated Founder's Day on Friday 15th November. Tutor groups reflected on our school values and these were incorporated into lessons through out the morning.

Each department took on of the FCJ values and produced lessons to show how the value is demonstrated through the curriculum.

We finished the day with our annual sponsored walk to raise money for the school and for The Passage, a charity which supports homeless people

Five Year 12 students attended the first training day on Wednesday 9th October at St Columba's RC College and have already proposed a number of exciting fundraising initiatives they would like to organise throughout the year.



Sixth Form High Achievers

The 6th Form was very-well represented at the Prize-giving Ceremony, but special mention must go to two of our students. A huge congratulations to both Luis Marku and Illias

Zghoundi ; Illias won the Sports Personality of the Year for a second time, and Luis was awarded Young Theologian of the Year. Luis also gained national recognition for winning the St Mary's University Theology essay competition.

Illias has competed nationally and internationally at various distances winning a staggering amount of gold medals and trophies.



He is the junior national champion at 100m, 400m and 800m; he won 100m gold at the national junior/senior championships. He won gold at the London Half Marathon and overall gold in the London 10K.

We are very proud of all our 6th Form students' achievements.



in London. It was a glorious day for walking in Regent's Park and we finished in record time!

Students raised over £2,500 for these worthwhile causes.





PHOTO



August: A Level Results



September: Yr10 Retreat to Aylesford



September: Yr10 Trip to Gillwell Park



October: Pumpkin Carving Competition



September: celebrating 50 years of Maria Fidelis



PHOTO GALLERY



October: Cultural Day



November: Prizegiving Ceremony



November: Sponsored Walk



November: Jack Petchey Awards Ceremony



November: Jack Petchey Speak Out Challenge



November: Inter-House Basketball



PHOTO GALLERY



November: Remembrance Day



December: Christmas Card Competition



December: Headmaster's Lunch



December: Pensioners' Party



December: Christmas Jumper Day



December: Carol Concert

Listening for connection

How to talk to your teenagers during the school break



A.

Make time to create quality and special time

- Playing games together
- Preparing things together (i.e., decorating, meals, baking)
- Watching films together
- Creating moments for incidental conversation
- Listening to their interests
- If their interest is computer games-join them
- Carve out time with no phones for everyone (digital hygiene)
- Time to be outside
- Physical activity together

B.



How to have a conversation

- Find a time when your child is relaxed
- Ask open questions
- Listen attentively
- Be open to hear what they say and don't be alarmed if they share something you did not know/ is worrying

Shout is a free, confidential, 24/7 text support service for you or your child if you need to reach out to someone. To start a conversation, text the word 'Shout' to 85258. Trained Shout Volunteers are here to listen at any time of day or night and messages won't appear on your phone bill.

shout
85258

C. Use this structure to start conversations

Wonder

Imagine

Notice

Empathy

- I wonder if you are feeling sad because...
- I imagine that made you feel angry when...
- I notice you seem a bit quiet...
- I'm so sorry you feel sad, is there anything I can do?

