



THE COMPANION

Mr D. O'Brien, Editor

Message from the Headmaster



Another wonderful year has passed at Maria Fidelis; it is the people who make this school and I could not wish for a more committed and dedicated staff or more wonderful students. Like every school, we have good days and bad days, but when I spoke with the Year 11s and the Year 13s as they came to the end of the exams, it reminded me of what a great place this school is. Inside this magazine, you will read about many of the exciting activities that students have been able to get involved with, and this would not be possible were it not for staff going over and above what is expected of them.

We began this term with the sad news about the death of Sr Ellen FCJ, who was a great supported of the school and always a friendly face for staff and students alike. She will be greatly missed, and there is a dedication to her on p2. We also lost Pope Francis, who was an inspiration to billions of people throughout the world and a great advocate for peace and harmony in our troubled times. We now look forward to a new leader in Pope Leo XIV. A number of our students attended the Festival of Hope at Westminster Cathedral and as well as meeting the Cardinal, they got the opportunity to find out more about what Catholic charities and organisations are doing to make our world a better place.

The Science Department welcomed nine new members to the school in June: Michael in Year 10 won a Jack Petchey Award and used the money to get a hatchery for the school and we had nine chicks hatch from eggs. Room 1.16 became the centre of the school for the two weeks we had the chicks with us and it was a great experience for children who saw them hatch and were able to hold them after a few days.

Sports Day was a huge success this year, and I congratulate Ms Weaver and Guillemet House on winning the Antlers this year. Well done to all who took part in the many events over the last years and thank you to the Heads of House for organising and overseeing another successful year of House competitions.

It is with great sadness that we say goodbye to Mr Salmon and Ms Chamorro, both of whom have been long-standing teachers of the school. We wish them both well in their new lives and I would like to express my sincere gratitude to them for their hard work and dedication to the students in their care here over many years here. We also say goodbye to Ms Kumar, Ms Everson, Ms Kennedy, Mr Adebayo, Mr de Rosa, Ms Proll and Mr Price. They have all served the students here well and they will be missed. I thank them all for their service to the students of Maria Fidelis. I wish you all a very happy and relaxing summer and I look forward to starting again in September. Our new Year 7 students will start on Wednesday 3rd September and the rest of the school start back on Thursday 4th.

Mr M. Anthony, Headmaster

Important Dates:

August 2025

Thurs 14th A Level Results Day

Thurs 21st GCSE Results Day

September 2025

Mon 1st INSET Day

Thurs 4th 1st day of term

Wed 24th Open Evening

October 2025

Fri 24th INSET Day

27th - 31st Half Term

December 2025

Fri 19th Last day of term



Final scores being announced at Sports Day 2025, with representatives of each House

FOCUS ON: SR ELLEN MCCARTHY FCJ RIP

Excerpts from Canon Jeremy Trood's homily for Sr Ellen's funeral:

Sister Ellen was admitted to hospital on the eve of Palm Sunday as the Church was gathering to commemorate Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, the start of Holy Week. Ellen may not have been physically present with us but she was very much with us in spirit and in prayer as we celebrated the great events of our redemption.

On Maundy Thursday we gathered here as a community to celebrate the Eucharist just as Jesus gathered with his disciples for their last supper. He took the bread, broke and gave it to them; he took the cup of wine, blessed it and gave it to them. This is my body, this is my blood. He promised that when this is re-enacted in his name then he will be present and he is present here with us this morning. As he is now present to Ellen who is preparing to enter into her Father's kingdom.

We are comforted because Ellen is now at peace, she has now become the person that God always intended her to be, she has moved forward, stepping out into the brilliance of the light of Christ. From this we can take comfort, secure in the knowledge that we shall see her again, when, our mortal lives over we too will follow where she had gone before and there be united in the overwhelming love of God our Father which Ellen is experiencing today. That is why we continue to celebrate our faith that through the Resurrection all of us will be united with the Father in heaven. That is the faith which sustains us here on earth. We give thanks to God for the goodness he has shown Ellen and trusting to his mercy look forward to the goodness he will show us.

Sr Ellen FCJ had supported Maria Fidelis for a number of years in the role of Chaplain. May she rest in peace.



Ms Uliwiak (Premises Manager) with Sr Ellen FCJ (RIP) at one of our Pensioner's Parties

Habemus Papam!

After the death of Pope Francis, the Cardinals of the Catholic Church met in Rome for the Conclave, from the Latin "with a key." Those under 80 were locked away in the Sistine Chapel to vote for the next Pope. Avoiding any distractions or influence from the outside world is essential if they are to truly listen to the promptings of the Holy Spirit.

After just 4 votes, the voting Cardinals reached a two-thirds consensus and elected Robert Francis Cardinal Prevost OSA as the 267th Pope, and 266th Successor to St Peter. The 69 year old American, who also holds Peruvian citizenship thanks to his extensive missionary work as an Augustinian there, took the name Pope Leo XIV.

Pope Leo XIV's motto is *In Illo Uno Unum*, meaning "In the One, we are One." This demonstrates his vision for the Church in one word: unity. It is clear from the first few weeks of his Papacy that our new Holy Father desires the universal Church to be united as one common family under God, walking together towards Jesus. Let us continue to pray for the ministry of Pope Leo XIV.



First Holy Communion



As part of our outreach with local parishes, back in June we invited the children who had celebrated their First Holy Communion at St Aloysius, Somers Town this summer to a celebration event.

Miss Hodey very kindly arranged for them to have a baking session with their family in our Food Tech room. The children made scones and cakes to share with their mum's. It gave the boys an opportunity to experience a Food Technology lesson, as well as see what life is like in their local secondary school.



Everyone involved had a thoroughly enjoyable morning, and there were some delicious treats served up by the boys after their hard work.

We look forward to hosting similar outreach events with the parish after the summer holidays, as well as with our feeder primary schools across Camden.

It is also possible for any prospective parents to visit for an open morning on Tuesdays between 9am and 10am. No booking is required, simply turn up.

Sacrament of Confirmation

Sunday 22 June was a joyful day at St Aloysius parish, Somers Town as nine young people were Confirmed by Bishop Nicholas Hudson. This means they are now fully initiated members of the Catholic Church.

It was a particular delight for Maria Fidelis, as five of our students were involved. Sr MaryAnne FCJ and Mr O'Brien (who is the Parish Catechist alongside working at Maria Fidelis) were incredibly impressed by their commitment to attending the preparation sessions, and delighted by the quality of their reflections on the Catholic faith. Bishop Nicholas also commented on their excellent reading and "prayerful reverence" whilst coming forward to be anointed with the oil of Chrism.



Pilgrimage to Knock Shrine

On Friday 11 July, the annual staff INSET day that focuses on Catholic Life, a group of six members of staff made a group pilgrimage to Knock Shrine in Co. Mayo, Ireland.

Knock is a significant place for Irish Catholics, as it is said that the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared there in 1879. Since then, it has become a place of pilgrimage, with thousands visiting to honour the mother of Our Lord Jesus Christ. The Shrine itself is a beautiful place of prayer, stillness and reflection, helping Catholics truly embrace their faith.

Whilst there for the day, staff attended Mass, had the opportunity to go to the Sacrament of Confession, and had lunch together at the Shrine's hotel. The afternoon was free to give staff time to socialise together and explore the beautiful grounds of the Shrine.

6th Form Leadership Conference

We welcomed Gumley House School FCJ on the 24th April for the annual conference as an introduction to school leadership for newly elected 6th Form teams. We spent the day together praying for a strengthening of their leadership skills, discussing what it truly means to be servant leaders and the values that needed to be successful in their new roles. They were given time to plan out their goals for the year. We then shared a meal provided by our school's catering team and Gumley House were also given a tour of our school.

Events like this are a wonderful way to bring the ethos of FCJ schools together, as well as demonstrating the true FCJ family.

Jubilee Festival of Hope

On Tuesday 24 June, a group from Maria Fidelis took part in a Festival of Hope liturgy at Westminster Cathedral, the mother Church of Catholics in England and Wales. Over 1,500 students from schools across the Diocese were present for the occasion.

Mr O'Brien and Mr McReynolds were delighted at the behaviour and attitude of the students, being true ambassadors of our school. Cardinal Vincent reflected on the fact that "nothing can separate us from the love of God" and how we are all called to make a personal pledge to bring hope to everyone we meet. The afternoon concluded with a time of Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and Benediction, before we had the opportunity to greet the Cardinal personally.



CAFOD Young Leaders

This cohort's Young Leaders; Finn, Matilda, Alleeka, Jean-Pascal and Selina, have completed their year of leadership and attended the Celebration Day at Romero House on the 11th of June.

The day included speeches by members of CAFOD's education and engagement teams and an inspiring speech by an alumni CAFOD Young Leader who has gone on to work for the charity immediately after completing his A-Levels.

Ian Byre MP also joined the celebration with a Q&A session, where he answered questions about his involvement in CAFOD's national and international work and how his own Catholic faith has impacted his decision-making in the Houses of Parliament.



CAFOD is the Catholic Agency For Overseas Development. It is the official Catholic aid agency for England and Wales, and part of Caritas International. CAFOD works through the local Church to reach people and places that others can't.

More information about their work can be found online at www.cafod.org.uk/about-us.

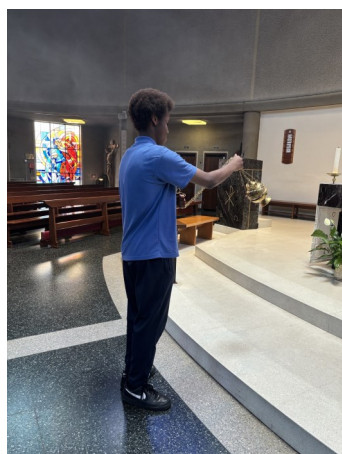
Visit to St Aloysius, Somers Town



As part of their unit on Church Architecture, one of Mr O'Brien's Year 9 classes spent a morning together exploring the church of St Aloysius, Somers Town.

Maria Fidelis and the parish have had a long standing relationship, enabling learning to be brought to life beyond the four walls of the classroom.

During the visit, the students were able to identify the names of each feature, describe them and, most importantly, explain why they are important for Catholic worship today.



Left:

Tshad Fingall (9F) learnt how to use the thurible, an metal incense holder on chains that a Priest uses during Mass to incense the Altar, Gospel and gifts of bread and wine that will become Jesus' Body and Blood.

It is harder to use than it looks!

Right:

Tara Goulde (9C) got the rare opportunity to sit on the side of the Confessional that no one gets to see: namely, the side reserved for the Priest.

Here is where the Priest will listen to Confessions, give advice and most importantly, absolve (wash away) all the sins that are confessed.



Year 10 Mock Exams

It might seem very unusual to feature the Year 10 mock exam season in a section on Catholic Life, but in fact at Maria Fidelis, the two are inseparable for a number of reasons.

Firstly, our new tannoy system replaces form time prayer with a whole school prayer and reflection at the start and end of each day. The morning prayer brings to a natural conclusion the hustle and bustle of Year 10 revision in the Library each morning. This helps calm the students before they are registered.



Secondly, our Exams Officer, Mr Harding, offers a prayer in the exam hall, specific to that subject, in the moments before the exam begins. This reassures our students that they are not alone in sitting their exam, and can rely on the help and guidance of the Holy Spirit to do their best and remember all that they need to remember.

Bible Verses

A very popular feature on the first floor is this small box outside the Chapel that contains short Bible verses to be taken by staff & students.

Students can often be found in small groups comparing what words of wisdom they have picked up, and how it relates to their daily life.



Jack Petchey Awards

We have run the Jack Petchey Achievement Award for many years here at Maria Fidelis. The award is given to those students who may have gone above and beyond to achieve – perhaps when others thought they might fail. Some students are given the award in recognition of the fact that they are great role models for other children.

To be nominated for the Award is a significant achievement and we are very proud of our winners so far this year. Please congratulate them if you see them!

Siem (7C): nominated by a classmate for “always trying hard in lessons and always being kin to everyone.”

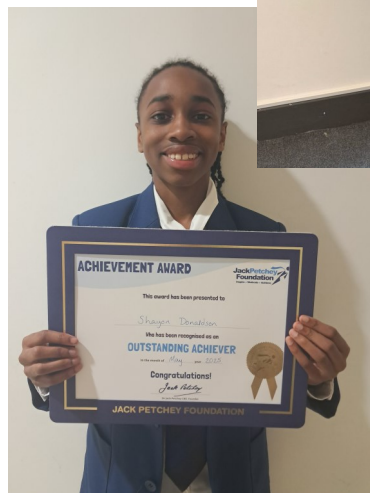
Mia (8A): nominated by Miss Sowden for being a “diligent and hardworking student.”

Hannaan (9C): nominated by fellow students for doing “so much for the school and being someone I look up to.”

Shayon (9L): nominated by fellow students for being “a good role model and a good friend who always supports us.”

Fareed (10F): nominated by Ms Lawson for “always working hard and being willing to do the right thing.”

Declan (Year 12): nominated by Ms Hammond for being “an asset to the school and being a founder of the school chess club.”



Farewell to the 'Lockdown Cohort'

Friday 23 May saw the Year 11 leaver's celebrations before they went on study leave around halfway through their GCSE exam season. It was an emotional day for many, and Mr Anthony highlighted how this year was particularly special as these students began secondary school during the COVID-19 lockdown. He led a reflection on how much they had grown and matured here, then spoke about the power of faith in adult life, using Jeremiah 29:11 as inspiration.

It was also wonderful to hear a number of students talk about their favourite memories at Maria Fidelis. Some stories were certainly memorable and had the whole room in stitches!

The celebrations concluded with a presentation to Mr Ayisire and Ms Atker, who have worked incredibly hard this academic year in guiding and preparing Year 11 for their GCSE exams.



Extra Curricular Activities

UK Junior Maths Challenge

Congratulations to our 19 students who achieved awards in the recent UKMT Junior Maths Challenge!

We are proud to announce that one student (Isabelle 8L) earned a Gold certificate, four pupils received Silver, and fourteen were awarded Bronze for their impressive mathematical problem-solving skills.

The top three students will participate in the next round, the Junior Kangaroo competition.

Omved Gardens

On Thursday 12 June, Ms Gill and Mr Langley led a small group of students on a visit to Omved Gardens in Hampstead. This excursion was a wonderful opportunity to experience the grounds, which include:

- Willow Circle
- Wildflower Meadow
- Orchard
- Vegetable Garden
- Kitchen



The students had a fantastic time and came back to school energised by their time spent together outdoors.

Getting out into nature is one of the best things all of us can do to improve our mental health and wellbeing, especially for those living in large cities like London.

EarthFest 2025

On 5 June, the Year 9 GCSE Geography students attended EarthFest, a four day festival which intends to inspire positive climate action.

The day was eye opening and full of empowering talks from L'myah Sherar (Founder of Enact Equality and advocate for racial equality and social justice), Mete Coban (Deputy Mayor of London for Environment and Energy) and Kerry McCarthy MP (minister for Climate at the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero).



Year 9 geography student Lashana Gordon (9A) reflects below on her experience of the day:

“During the day the students went to different parts of Coal Drops Yard and met important figures that want to encourage climate action. A key takeaway was when we looked at air pollution across the UK and how it effects certain communities. It showed how people of ethnic backgrounds seem to reside in areas of higher levels of air pollution and suffer the most from health issues, creating a sense of injustice. We also talked about how young people have the ability to make a change. Schools were encouraged to talk to their local MP about climate action.”



On your bike!

Danny Louis de Canonville (9C), Reo Killick (10F) and Ronnie Payne (8A) all take part in a small business bike intervention that runs every Friday. It is a free service for local residents that encourages good mental health, independence and community engagement.

The students learn how to run a small business, the importance of communication, as well as customer service skills while fully servicing bikes that local residents leave to be repaired. They learn how to use a variety of tools including wrenches, tire levers, chain and breaker checkers, to name just a few.

On Friday 16 May, Camden's Deputy Mayor came down and stopped to talk to the students. Danny, Reo and Ronnie communicated to him and other members of Camden Council with care and calmness, always with a smile and happily answered the variety of questions that were asked.

The boys worked really hard as it was a busy day, and all completed their tasks. The Deputy Mayor said he was very proud that students from Maria Fidelis was providing an important service to the local community and asked the students for a picture which made the boys both happy and proud.



The Girls' Network

A group of 30 Year 9 and Year 10 girls were chosen this term to take part in a series of workshops and sessions run by The Girls' Network, a scheme that aims to inspire and empower girls by connecting them to a mentor and network of female professionals to act as role models and guides.

In each session, the girls were encouraged to consider their goals and aspirations in life. With this in mind, they were paired with a mentor to guide them through how they could achieve these goals.

The purpose of this pairing was to give inspiration to the girls and challenge stereotypes and expectations that could act as a barrier to progress and success later in life. The mentors commended the aspirations our students had, and were delighted with the maturity shown by our students over the scheme.



The Girls' Network
Unlimited futures for all young women



Aristophanes' *The Frogs*

By Feven Moges 12ii

Year 12 Classics students visited the Southwark Playhouse on Wednesday 18 June to watch a production of Aristophanes' *The Frogs*. The performers brought incredible energy to the stage, adding a modern twist to the ancient comedy through music, movement and sharp humour.

It was a great opportunity for us as students to experience the play in a fresh, dynamic way especially as we'll be studying it next year. The production really brought the text to life and sparked plenty of discussion on the way home.



Work Experience at London Zoo

During the summer term, a small group from Maria Fidelis were given the once in a lifetime opportunity to gain some valuable work experience at ZSL London Zoo. The students shadowed zookeepers whilst they completed the long list of daily tasks across the enclosures to ensure the animals were kept both healthy and happy.

Students also had the time to participate in these tasks too, from cleaning the glass on the penguin enclosure (see below) to feeding other wildlife around the site. This was a valuable insight into the hard work zookeepers do behind the scenes to enable us to visit and learn about these wonderful creatures from all over the world.

The idea of the Zoo Academy is to encourage young people to consider a career in conservation, particularly as the number of endangered species rises. ZSL London Zoo particularly works with young people to ensure that finance or background is never a barrier to working with these wonderful creatures.

Maria Fidelis has a long history with the Zoo, with Year 7 visiting every year during Enrichment Week in July.



Hiking

We are delighted to share the wonderful news that the Year 12 students pictured here were awarded a grant from the Mark Evison Foundation to complete a hike along the Seven Sisters cliffs. During the hike they filmed a documentary about growing up, interviewing members of the public and sharing their own reflections on their childhoods as they approach turning 18.



During our International Day, these Sixth Formers raised funds to give back to the Mark Evison Foundation as a token of their appreciation for the funding they received to complete this expedition.

Debate Club



A key skill students must master before adulthood is the ability to defend their point of view confidently in front of others, particularly those who have a different opinion.

It is a great joy therefore to celebrate the growth and success of the Debate Club over the last year, run by Ms Low. Each week, students meet after school to discuss a statement, deciding what their core arguments will be, consider any weaknesses in their approach that need resolving, as well as highlighting any criticisms of the opposing point of view. After some time together in their teams, all students come together and take part in a formal debate.

Just recently, our students went to a local school's Debate Competition, in order to gain experience of debating against strangers and working together as one big team. This was a great opportunity for our students to put into practice all the key skills they have learnt over the past year.

We are incredibly proud of the confidence with which they debated, showcasing themselves as true ambassadors of Maria Fidelis.

Any students who wish to join are more than welcome to, simply speak to Ms Low for more information.



Students at the Francis Crick Institute

On Monday 30 June, 80 Year 8 students attended a show at the Francis Crick Institute, the large biomedical laboratory down the road from Maria Fidelis. The 'Cracking Science Crick Show' is an annual event and the topic for 2025 is food science and digestion.

The students participated in various exciting and entertaining experiments designed to bring to life what they had been learning in the classroom this year.



Staff at the Francis Crick Institute

Three members of the Science Department attended a CPD session at The Francis Crick Institute as part of an industry placement scheme which is funded by the Education and Training Foundation. As part of our Laboratory Science T Level, this course aims to give staff up to date industry experience and to introduce cutting edge developments in the world of science and medicine. Staff can then introduce these concepts to the T Level students in their lessons so that when they do the nine-week work placement, they are prepared for this exciting new environment.

On the day, the staff visited various labs including Flow Cytometry, Fermentation, the Fly Lab and Weston Discovery Lab. This proved to be an inspiring and rewarding day for the staff and we would like to thank Ms. Ellie Horner from The Crick for organising such a wonderful experience. We look forward to another three members of staff attending in the new academic year.

Jewellery Workshop: Creative Dimensions Trust

Over the past four years we have been working with the Creative Dimensions Trust to deliver a series of mini foundation courses at Maria Fidelis. The charity aims to support talented young people, providing them with the skills and confidence needed to pursue careers that require core hand skills. The courses are fully funded and students must attend all five sessions after school. They take place on Tuesdays from 3.20-5.30pm.

The courses so far have included gilding, leatherwork, furniture making, tailoring and jewellery making. Each session is delivered by an expert in the field and participation can open further opportunities for participants to attend other courses in the future. Students do not need to have previous experience but usually have an interest in Art and Design, Design Technology or developing new practical skills and it is for this reason that the Science Department are support this initiative. Next academic year we will be running the leatherwork, jewellery, and furniture making workshops with students allowed to take the items made home.

The Creative Dimensions Trust has appointed Mr. Paul Ravn, an expert jeweller and fellow of the Institute of Professional Goldsmiths to run the jewellery making course. The leatherwork is taught by Ms. Candice Lau, a master leather worker and the furniture making is delivered by Ms Emma Leslie, designer and furniture maker. The CDT hopes that participants will see that working in these areas is a real prospect for a future career.

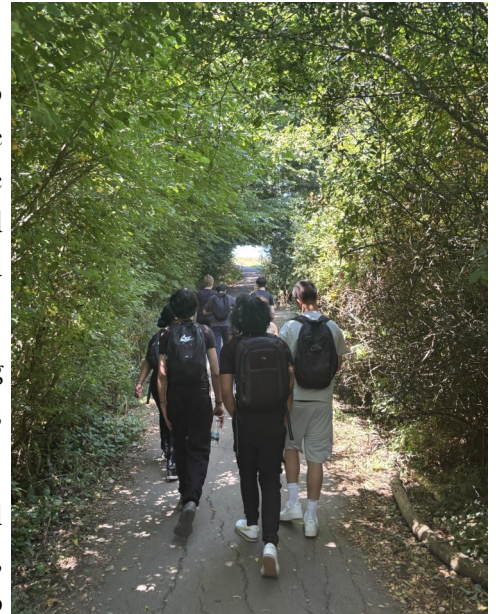
Students needs to be in Years 10-13 to take part and as there are only ten places available for each course they need to apply early. They can express their interest to Ms. Gamble who will put names on the waiting list. For further information on other workshops, please visit: www.thecreativedimension.org/workshops.

Duke of Edinburgh Award Expedition Practice

In the blistering heat on Monday 30 June, 28 Year 10 pupils travelled up to Parliament Hill to put their map-reading and orienteering skills to the test. This is in preparation for their 2-day expedition in Buckinghamshire in July which forms one part of their Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award Scheme. They must also be learning a skill, taking part in a sport and completing volunteer work in their community to receive the Award.

The award is designed to help young people aged 14-24 “ build lifelong belief in themselves, supporting them to take on their own challenges, follow their passions, and discover talents they never knew they had.”

The 6km route (designed by Ms Everson) meant students set off in small groups and had to reach specific checkpoints supervised by Mr Fa'alogo, Ms Low, Mr O'Brien and Ms Everson herself. This ensured no group would take any short cuts and cheat!



The day was a very successful one with all groups completing the route successfully. The first group to arrive, seen in the photo to the left, seemed to do the entire route in record time!

We wish them all the very best of luck on their overnight expedition later this term.

Maria Fidelis is proud to work alongside Camden Council in participating in the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme. Each spring, Year 10 students are invited to register. Places are limited so applications should be completed and returned as soon as possible.

The Championships, Wimbledon

On one of the hottest days of the year, Tuesday 1 July, some of our Year 9 GCSE students were fortunate enough to travel to Wimbledon to watch some of the world's greatest tennis players compete in this year's tournament.

On Court 2, the students watched J. Pegula (ranked 3rd in the world) lose to E. Cocciaretto in straight sets.

In between exploring the large grounds and many, many courts at Wimbledon, the students also got to watch Italian L. Musetti (ranked 7th in the world) lose to N. Basilashvili from Georgia.

This was a wonderful opportunity to watch professionals playing live in one of the most famous tennis venues in the world. We hope that trips like this might inspire our students to persevere and reach the top of their game in the near future!



Duke of Edinburgh Award Expedition

Following their successful practice on Hampstead Heath, 28 Year 10 students headed off for their two-day expedition in the Chilterns as part of their Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award. The first day plan was immediately curtailed as there were signal problems on the trainline around Harrow-on-the-Hill, meaning we ended up relying on a very kind bus driver to take us from Aylesbury to Wendover to begin the expedition (albeit from the finish to the start due to the train cancellations!)

The students were sent off in five different groups with a map and compass, and had to reach three checkpoints, manned by Maria Fidelis staff. The students carried everything they needed with them on their backs, and were prohibited from bringing their phones. It was wonderful to see them all living out our FCJ Value of Companionship, supporting each other when times got tough.

As the day progressed, the gaps between the groups widened, with some taking wrong turns and relying on the help of locals to point them back in the right direction. Eventually, by 8pm, all groups had arrived and set up camp. Then came the next important job: dinner. Using primitive gas stoves, students had to cook their own meals, which seemed to predominantly be pot noodles! After dinner, some sat around chatting while others played football or reignited a love of the primary school playground iconic game of British bulldog.

With the sun setting, revealing the silence of the countryside and beauty of the stars, students got into their tents and settled down for a night on the ground. Clearly, pot noodles are a great source of energy, as Mr O'Brien experienced, being woken up at 5:20am by students asking for their football so they could play! Safe to say they were told to wait until after breakfast.

Sadly, immediately after breakfast, the skies opened and our students had to put down their tents and pack everything away in the pouring rain. Once this was completed, they set off for the second day's route. Unlike the previous day, all five groups reached the first checkpoint within five minutes of each other. In fact, they were so quick, they had to be stalled to allow Ms Low and Mr Fa'alogo time to get to their respective checkpoints!

By 2pm, all groups had arrived at the finishing point in the beautiful town of Great Missenden. It was reassuring to see that even with the terrible weather, all students were safe and in good spirits. The teambuilding continued on the train back to London, with many groups playing Uno. Some, rather sensibly, used this time to catch up on sleep!

Ms Everson, Ms Low, Mr Fa'alogo and Mr O'Brien were delighted with the commitment and dedication of the students, and really proud of the resilience they all showed. We look forward to hearing what volunteering and sporting activities they embark on so that they can be awarded with a Bronze Award.



PE Department

Year 10 v Regent's High School

We had only just returned from the Easter holidays when the Year 10 futsal team took on local rivals Regent's High School in a short after-school fixture. The team demonstrated outstanding resilience against a strong and tactical team and greatly appreciated the support of a dozen or so students and staff who stayed behind to watch.



Our Maria Fidelis boys were trailing at the break but got a few goals back in the second half after an inspiring team talk by Mr Cranny. Sadly, the game still ended in defeat, but we are immensely proud of the team's maturity and attitude.

Inter-House Football Tournament



Each Friday throughout the term, the House leads organised football tournaments for every year group on Friday lunchtimes. These were fantastic opportunities to bring the whole school community together, building relationships and learning the importance of teamwork.

Students would compete in short fixtures against their peers, representing their houses and earning points towards the end of year total.

The tournament could not have gone ahead without a number of Year 10 boys volunteering to referee each game. These boys oversaw every game in a truly impartial way, as well as cheering on the teams and advising on tactics to deploy.

As the weeks progressed, the crowds increased too, with students even coming up with their own chants and songs to cheer on the teams.

It was truly wonderful to see so many young people embody our FCJ values.

Staff v Student Football Tournament

The culmination of the House sport events in May was held at the 'MUGA Stadium' on Friday 23 May, where each Year 10 house team squared up against the Staff, who play together after work on Thursdays. All week the students had been boasting about their chance of successes, despite losing 3-1 in the last Staff v Student game only a month or two ago! To ensure the game was fair, we enlisted PC Matt Cox, Safer Schools Officer, as the referee!

Each game ended 1-0 to the Staff, so to give the students a fighting chance, we offered them a final 'all-stars' game, which ended in a draw. It was a wonderful end to the half term, with hundreds of staff and students watching and cheering on the teams.

It is hoped we can run similar events in the near future.



Sports Day 2025

Friday 27 June saw the annual Maria Fidelis Sports Day for Years 7-9, held at Parliament Hill Athletics Track. This year provided an added challenge to our athletes, given the scorching heat and minimal shade. Nevertheless, all students participated with a wonderful attitude, cheering their houses on and encouraging each other to never give up.



Throughout the morning, students represented their houses in both track and field events. Scores were collected throughout the day to determine which house would be crowned triumphant at the conclusion of all the events.



As well as the individual races and field events, there were also a number of team events, such as the 4x100m relay and the tug of war, one of the most popular events of the day. There was even a staff tug of war (with some assistance from students for the weaker houses!) .



It was inspiring to see the young men and women of Maria Fidelis working as a team, sometimes when they did not really know each other before the day began. This is a true embodiment of our FCJ values.



Entertainment for the event was kindly provided by Head of Music, Mr Rodrigues Fonseca and his team of drummers.

At the end of the day, after some of the staff had embarrassed themselves in the sack race and relay, the final scores had been calculated and verified by Ms Chow and Mr Coombes.

For the second year in a row, Guillemet House were crowned victor!

We thank Mr Cranny and all of the PE department for running yet another successful and enjoyable day for all, and we look forward to seeing who will take home the trophy in 2026.



New Life at Maria Fidelis

In mid-June, ten eggs were delivered to Maria Fidelis. Just two days later, we came into school to find one tiny, fluffy, newly hatched chick. Throughout that day and the next students and staff alike watched with excitement and bated breath as eight more beautiful chicks came out into the world. Every breaktime, lunchtime and even afterschool there have been queues to come and hold or just observe our little chicks. As well as now knowing a lot more about chickens than we did before, both staff and students have commented on how calming the presence of the chicks has been and how they have brightened people's days. This experience was made possible thanks to Michael Ekwuabu (10W) who allowed us to use some of the money he was awarded from his Jack Petchey award.

There has already been a lot of discussion about which little creatures we would like to have at school next year if we are able to, suggestions have ranged from tiny jumping spiders to Axolotls.



Above:

Bowie Walters in 7L helping with the transfer of the chicks into their larger enclosure barely 24 hours after they hatched.

Left:

10F were delighted with the new-born guests in their form room, which provided a time of peace and stillness at the start and end of each day. This was very helpful considering the hatchings coincided with the Year 10 mock exams.



Year 11 Prom

This year, Year 11 took to the River Thames to take in the spectacular London skyline from Battersea to Greenwich for their Year 11 Prom.



On the top deck, students were able to get their selfies and group photos with iconic landmarks whilst also enjoying the beautiful evening weather. Many people waved down to the boat, only adding to the students' feel of 'celebrity status.'

Downstairs, students were entertained with a DJ who played a wide range of requests. The Maria Fidelis staff that were supervising certainly showed our outgoing Year 11s a thing or two about how to move on the dancefloor!



At the end of the evening, the staff working on board the vessel remarked that over the 100+ proms they had done so far, the students from Maria Fidelis were the "politest, nicest, best dressed and most well mannered" that they had had the privilege of welcoming on board.

We look forward to meeting Year 11 once more on the morning of Thursday 21 August when they will find out their final GCSE grades! In our next edition of we will share the great successes of 2025. In the meantime though, we wish them a very well earned summer break.

Film Premiere

The staff at Maria Fidelis were privileged to be invited to a private showing of a short film called *She*, written and directed by our very own Ms Michaels from the English Department. The film, which is itself split into five mini films, explores key ideas, struggles and challenges of womanhood at different stages.

These 5 different female stories about motherhood include: a pregnant woman and her partner doesn't support her, a woman who doesn't desire to have children, a single mother, an adoptive mother and a woman who couldn't conceive and gives all her love to her dog.



Ms Michaels summarises the film herself by saying: “The film illuminates different perspectives on motherhood, raises questions about its meaning and the dedication needed to raise a child, as well as the stereotypes a woman faces when she turns 30. The central message of the film is the love we have within us and how we express it.”

The staff were very moved by the real life stories that inspired some of the scenes, and were captivated by the answers Ms Michaels gave in the Q&A session afterwards, hosted by Ms Gill.

We look forward to seeing what her next film will be about!

All Creatures Great and Small

Once again this summer we were delighted to host Wild Fangs UK, a company that specialises in educational animal encounters. Staff and students alike were captivated by the range of animals they not only got to see. Each animal was introduced and the key facts about that species were shared, before we had the opportunity to either touch or hold the animals as they were taken around the room.

Opportunities like this are a fantastic way to bring education to life, as well as create memorable experiences that foster curiosity that extends beyond the classroom. It was a delight to see how captivated our students were when meeting these animals.

We thank Ms Gill for organising this event once again. As seen here, she fully embraced meeting the exotic creatures, even making sure her outfit matched the patterns of the python!



Prizegiving Ceremony

One of the most joyful nights in the Maria Fidelis calendar is our Prizegiving Ceremony, this year held on Thursday 3 July. Over the course of the evening, over 50 students received awards from all subjects, having been nominated by their class teachers. These awards are not for those who score top of the class, but for those who always try their best, contribute in lesson, and never give up.

There were also specific awards given to many of our talented musicians and sportsmen and women, who represented Maria Fidelis at events across Camden and beyond. We thank Ms Chow for her hard work in organising a very successful evening.

Drama Club

The Drama Club have been busy in rehearsals preparing for a performance of an original play written by the club. In this play we follow Amelia, a new student who is apprehensive about joining Maria Fidelis. We follow her on her first day and experience the highs and lows of secondary school. Through the FCJ Values, of Excellence, Hope, Companionship, Dignity, Justice and Gentleness, Amelia will soon find out just how exciting and welcoming a new school can be!

Freya Caley (8L) from the Drama Club said “this play shows that everyone has the same feelings when starting something new, but it’s always worth it in the end. Drama Club has been an eye-opening experience and has provided us with a lot of opportunities to try new things.”

The school performance took place on the morning of 9th July with a second evening performance at our Summer Concert that evening. Both of them were a remarkable success!

Year 8 at Enigma Quests (Escape Rooms)

A review of the Jack Petchey Award Trip by Aliyah Marie Cooper (8W). The trip was paid for by the prize money won by Mia-Anne Torres (8A).

My trip to the Enigma Quest was one of the best experiences I have had in a long time. It was full of different emotions, from excitement to pressure, and I was able to develop communication skills with many more of my friends throughout this trip.

I loved how they created a bracelet to count our points, allow us to choose our room and enter it, and have a personal team name! It was amazing that we had a variety of escape rooms to challenge us such as laser tag and 'the floor is lava', where we had to avoid touching the padded floors and press multiple buttons at once, and guess the ingredients in a dish, most of which we were clueless about! These escape rooms involved learning to cooperate as a group and work together to solve the problems.

The 5-minute timer made it even more difficult, pressuring us to beat the boys, which of course we did! At the end my team were able to reach around 50,000 points and we were undefeated!

To conclude our experience, I believe that not only were we able to adapt our co-operation and competitive traits and skills, but also to improve our friendships and make great memories that will last a lifetime. To me, Enigma Quest was 10/10!



Music Department



Marimba Band

At the start of the year, Mr Rodrigues Fonseca set up a Marimba Band. Almost immediately they were called upon to play as people entered the school for events. Now, as we reach the conclusion of their first year, they can be relied upon to greet our guests with professional, wide ranging and popular songs from a great variety of genres. Every person who hears them play stops in their tracks, even for a moment, just to experience the amazing sounds and rhythms they produce. In fact, this term, they were awarded Gold in the UK National Schools Music Competition. And this is only the beginning!

Choir

Our school choir have performed at a number of events this year, including our Prizegiving Ceremony. They have also performed at the Royal Albert Hall earlier in the term as part of Camden's music schemes. We are delighted with the growth of the choir over this academic year and thank the hard-working staff who lead our young musicians.



Summer Music Concert

Another major highlight of the Summer Term is our annual music concert. This year, we actually held two concerts on Wednesday 9 July: one in the morning when we welcomed around 150 local primary school children, and the main evening concert, open to students, families, friends, staff and governors.

The morning performance was sensational, with one primary school student commenting "the students here are so talented!" as he left, with visiting staff from the schools thanking us for the "privilege" of being able to hear such professional sounding music. For our performers, the concert for the primary schools helped calm the nerves many were feeling. For some of our students, this was the very first time they had performed in public!

The evening concert not only matched, but exceeded the morning one. Every performance was met with emphatic applause, and rightly so. Some soloists even received a standing ovation! We are so proud of the young men and women who performed, bringing so much joy and happiness through their talents to all who listened.



Art & Design Department

Year 12 began painting their oil drum murals on Chalton Street, NW1. They should be completed shortly so keep an eye out for them if you are walking around the neighbourhood!



Year 10 Workshop

Year 10 students were kindly invited to the Courtauld Museum to explore identity and portraiture for a day workshop last month. They viewed original drawings in the prints and drawings room and made work in response to Van Gogh and other paintings in the collection. Staff from the Courtauld are coming in to school to explore ways to analyse paintings and to develop understanding of Art History of the 20th Century.



Primary School Art Masterclass

A class of Year 5 students from St Patrick's Primary School took part in an art masterclass in which they explored the idea of drawing with paper.

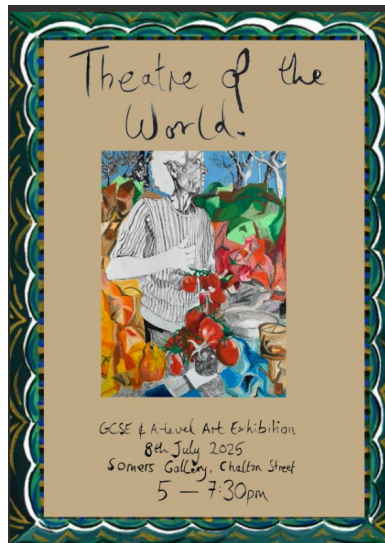
The lesson was carefully designed by Miss Vestburg-Thomas (Art Technician) based on her own printmaking work. The students successfully produced greetings cards of animals that they were able to take home to their families.



Maria Fidelis Art Exhibition

On Tuesday 8 July, students, staff, school governors and local residents were treated to a wonderful display of artwork at the Somers Gallery on Chalton Street. What made this exhibition so special is that every exhibit was designed and completed by students at Maria Fidelis.

This was a great opportunity for our aspiring artists to showcase their projects, many of which had been developed over many months. These pieces form part of their GCSE and A Level Art & Design qualifications. Every visitor commented on the professional nature of each feature, and many said that they would be more than happy to pay to purchase the artwork!



Frankenstein Adjusts His Ring Light (and then starts dancing)

On Wednesday the 2nd July we had the fortune of welcoming the Donmar Warehouse to our school. Year 8 were treated to a live theatre production of a piece of new writing that blended themes found in their Gothic Fiction unit as well as in their own lives. Mixing Gothic fiction with Artificial Intelligence might seem like tacking the impossible but with the help of Sabrina Carpenter (yes, really!), and a good few TikTok dances (not from the teachers!), the story of Frankenstein was brought to life with a 21st Century Twist.

Mr McReynolds, who organised the visit said, "I was so glad to see the Year 8s enjoying a theatre experience. I couldn't believe how much they all enjoyed it and they really showed the very best of our school!" There was even some audience participation during the performance with the students being asked questions by the characters and giving advice. While they may not have been on stage, they were certainly the stars of these scenes!

One Year 8 boy was overheard saying "that was so modern and I really feel like they did that to appeal to a younger audience" and when asked for her thoughts a Year 8 girl said "I liked the dances, it was so funny and enjoyable. The hour just flew by!"

While saying our goodbyes, the Head of School Participation told Mr McReynolds "Maria Fidelis is such a beautiful school and we can't wait to work with you all again." Spoiler Alert - our Drama Club will be heading back to London's famous west End to perform in 2026! Watch this space!



English Department: Library Lessons

We are excited to share that our Year 7 and 8 pupils have been taking part in dedicated library lessons this term, designed to foster a lifelong love of reading and build essential research skills. These sessions go beyond simply borrowing books – they help students explore a wide range of genres, develop independent learning habits, and become confident, curious readers. From navigating the library to participating in book discussions and reading challenges, our pupils are gaining valuable skills that support their learning across all subjects.

Ms. Michaels (Literacy Coordinator)



7A had many wonderful experiences in our library which have supported our learning and made lessons more interactive and fun. In our first lesson, we learned about the behaviour rules which taught us how to act sensibly when we are in the library. Furthermore, we explored different genres of books and picked a few books which we thought looked interesting. After reading the blurbs and looking at the front covers of the book, we filled out a review sheet including our opinions about the book.

In our second library lesson we played reading bingo. This was a great opportunity to remember books we had previously read and also to recommend books to our classmates. The game involved searching in the library for a book we had read already, and filling out a sheet with categories to put the book in (e.g., a detective story or a legend/myth). We then rated the book and answered questions about it. This game helped me to discover books I would like to read in the future. It also taught us how to correctly write a review and strengthened our skills of summarising a story. I look forward to visiting the library again!

By Abby Luke (7A)

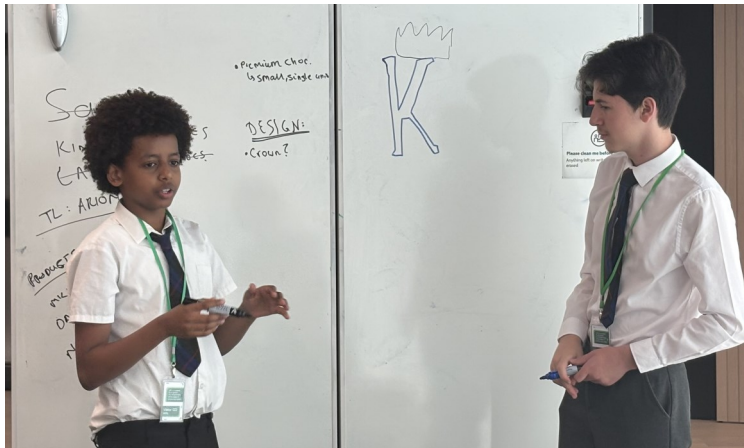
I really enjoyed our library lessons this term! At first, I thought they would just be about reading quietly, but they turned out to be much more entraining and useful. One of the best parts was learning how to use the library properly: how to find books using the signages for each genre. It made me feel more confident when looking for books on my own. We also did some interesting activities, like book quizzes, reading challenges, and even writing short reviews for books we borrowed. It helped me discover new genres and authors I wouldn't have picked up before. Our librarian Ms. Belter and our English Teacher Ms. Michaels were both really helpful and always recommended books that matched what I liked to read. I also liked the quiet atmosphere – it's a nice break from busy lessons. Overall, I think library lessons have helped me improve my reading and made me more interested in books.

I hope we get to keep having them next year!

By Dylan Blagoev Pereira da Silveira Borges (8C)

Careers: Year 10 at Deloitte

Friday 18 July saw Year 10 spend the day at Deloitte, a company near Farringdon. This trip saw our students discuss, plan, design and present their ideas on a product they thought of from scratch. These varied from a new brand of chocolate to a desk lamp with voice activated lighting colours and wireless charging point.



All students were confident in presenting their ideas to the panel (made up of Deloitte staff) and responded well to questions from the wider student audience.

We are very lucky at Maria Fidelis to be invited to bring a Year group to their central London offices every summer, helping expose students to the variety of roles in the city.



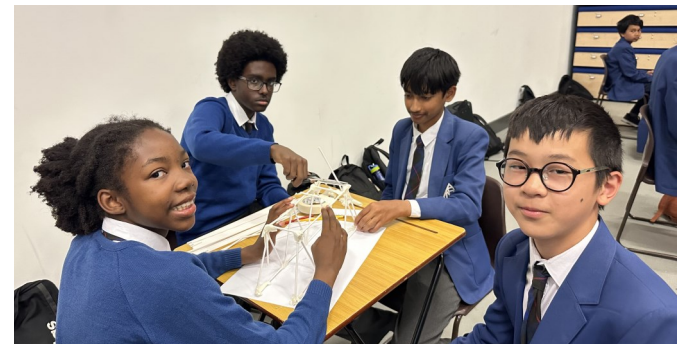
This project, like a task on *The Apprentice*, was well received by our students and the staff at Deloitte commented on how professional and collaborative Year 10 were in their small groups.



Careers: STEAM Day

Students from Years 7-9 were selected to take part in a STEAM workshop run by HS2 on Tuesday 8th July 2025. During the day students took part in a range of activities such as becoming familiar with STEAM careers available in transport infrastructure; getting to know the skills required to work in STEM careers and understand how railway infrastructure is developed.

The first main activity of the day was called “Stations of the Future,” a team-based design-and-present activity where students compete to design a futuristic train station considering future trends and the needs of all customers. Each member of the team had a different real-life job role within the team and to be responsible for the associated aspects of the design. At the end of the activity students presented their designs to the rest of the group



The afternoon was spent in small groups completing “Tunnel Building,” where students designed, constructed, and tested a supporting structure for a cut and cover tunnel. Some were much more successful than others!

Year 12 Picnic



The beautiful summer weather did not let us down in late July as Year 12 headed over to Regent's Park for their end of term picnic. This has become an annual tradition over recent years to help our Year 12s wind down after the intensity of end of year exams.

During the day, students not only shared food and drinks together, but competed in games of rounders, tug of war, and even a few sack races! Ms Sowden, Head of Sixth Form, commented that it was a "lovely way to end the year and celebrate all the hard work that Year 12 have put in."

Out and about in London

Over the final few days of the term, each year group participated in various enrichment activities or trips. Year 7 enjoyed exploring London Zoo, whilst Year 8 headed down to Hampton Court Palace to experience this historical gem and learn even more about the Tudor era. Year 9 visited Kew Gardens near Richmond to explore the variety of exotic plants on display there.

We also held a rewards trip to Thorpe Park, where students with the most number of merits were treated to a day out testing their nerves on the rollercoasters!



PHOTO GALLERY



May: Year 9 Inter-House Football Tournament



May: Year 10 Faber House team warming up



May: Mr Barnwell scoring his glorious goal



May: Year 11 Leavers Assembly



May: Year 11 Shirt Signing



May: UK Junior Maths Challenge participants

PHOTO GALLERY



June: First Holy Communion Celebration



June: Confirmandi with Bishop Nicholas Hudson



June: Geography Students at 'EarthFest'



June: Chicks hatching



June: Library Lessons with Key Stage 3



June: Year 11 Prom

PHOTO GALLERY



June: Students attending the Festival of Hope



June: Duke of Edinburgh Award Practice



July: Prizegiving Ceremony



July: Art Exhibition, Somers Gallery



July: Summer Music Concert



July: Donmar Warehouse Theatre Show

PHOTO GALLERY



July: Staff at Knock Shrine, Co. Mayo, Ireland

Ms Proll, Mr Campbell, Mr O'Connell, Ms Whelan & Mr O'Brien pictured after landing back in London. Mr McLoughlin was also part of the pilgrimage group on the day, but took a slightly earlier flight home.



July: Mass at Knock Shrine, Co. Mayo, Ireland

The high point of the day was attending Mass at the Basilica of Our Lady of Knock, beneath the beautiful mosaic of the apparition scene. Prayers were offered for the intentions of everyone in the wider Maria Fidelis community.

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Parent/Guardian Signature _____

I have read and agree to the Camden Summer University consent form (tick box)

You will need to complete a parent/guardian consent form for each child.
Please scan the signed form and return to kathleen.blake-pink@camden.gov.uk



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