



THE COMPANION

Mr D. O'Brien, Editor

Message from the Headmaster

Dear students, parents and carers,

As you will read, this year has been filled with a wide range of events and activities for our students to enjoy. These events cement our values of justice, companionship, hope, excellence, gentleness and dignity. Students have excelled in debating, mooting, football, basketball, public speaking and publishing. The editorial team of our student paper *Fidelis Today* won the Rising Star Award at the recent Shine Social media Awards. This was a well-deserved recognition of the high-quality journalism shown in the paper.

On a number of schools trips and visits, our students have been complimented by the public on their maturity, good-manners and confidence, and this is a real credit to their parents. They have stood out in the mooting competition at Hampstead School, the *Count On Us* Maths Challenge at Camden School for Girls, at the Mathematics competition at Imperial College and at the STEM event at the prestigious Harrow School.

Our Educare group came 2nd out of schools from Brentwood and Westminster dioceses in their Oracy Competition. Three of our Year 7 students co-ordinated a huge campaign to make our school and the local community a cleaner and brighter place for all. They went to Westminster and gave a powerful testimonial about the work they have done and the impact it has had. You can read all about it on pp5-6.

Our sports teams have represented the school well and various competitions and we have high hopes for even greater achievements next year. Your children compete and hold their own at the very highest level and you have every right to be proud of them!

It is with great sadness that we say goodbye to a number of staff this year. Mr Rhoden, Mr Coombes and Dr Murphy are moving on after decades of service to the school. Between them, they have shaped and influenced the lives of thousands of children and hundreds of staff here, and have been a significant force for good in the life of the school. We wish them and the other members of staff who will be leaving us the very best in their new ventures after life at Maria Fidelis.

I wish you all a well-earned and restful summer holiday and I look forward to welcoming our new Year 7 students back on Friday 4th September, and the rest of the School on Monday 7th September.

Mr Anthony, Headmaster

Important Dates:

September 2026:

- 4th: First Day for Year 7
- 7th: First Day of Term
- 23rd: Open Evening

October 2026:

- 23rd: INSET Day
- 26th-30th: Half Term



Sixth Form students visiting 10 Downing Street to meet with Rt Hon Keir Starmer MP

FOCUS ON: MR RHODEN, DR MURPHY & MR COOMBES



Mr Rhoden joined the school in 1974 before it became Maria Fidelis. He initially came just for the summer to help set up the Science Department, but thankfully he never left. Mr Rhoden was awarded the BEM in 2019 for services to education and received the honour at the Tower of London. With his vast experience and knowledge, he has mentored and supported new staff to help them develop as science teachers, but he has also given his time to many students as they prepare for their exams. We are very pleased that he will be helping out in the Science Department in the future as a volunteer.

Another long-serving member of our school, is Mr Coombes, who joined in 1996. Mr Coombes has been a very popular chemistry teacher, but not many people know that he was also Head of IT and Head of Sixth Form before being appointed as an assistant headteacher. One of Mr Coombes' greatest achievements was his significant contribution to the design and layout of our new school building, and he was the main school link with the project management team for many years in the lead-up to the school being built.



We also say goodbye to Dr Murphy. She became a teacher at Maria Fidelis in 1998 and has supported many staff and students over the years. Dr Murphy has played a significant role in our school, particularly in the Sixth Form and as a staff governor for many years. She has always been supremely calm and a staunch supporter of the school and its values.

All three members of staff will be greatly missed and we wish them the best in their new ventures.

Farewell from the Editor

This is the final edition of *The Companion* that I will be overseeing as editor. This role has been an absolute delight, seeing the huge range of exciting and inspiring opportunities students at Maria Fidelis are invited to participate in. Putting everything together each term has been quite the task, as there is always so much to include! Each edition has showcased just how many staff go above and beyond to give our young people the best possible education and opportunities, even beyond the classroom.

As I prepare to leave Maria Fidelis after just over two years to embark on my formation for the Priesthood at the Royal & Pontifical English College of St Alban in Valladolid, Spain, I owe a great deal of thanks to the students, staff and parents that have made working here such a joy and privilege. Please pray for me, as I will be praying for you.



Afternoon Tea Party

Each year it is a wonderful joy to invite locals to two major outreach events: our Pensioner's Christmas Party and the Summer Tea Party. Our canteen was full to bursting with many of our guests becoming regular visitors to both these events.

This year's Pensioners' Tea Party was a great success. Students from Years 7-10 did a wonderful job serving food and refreshments to our guests, helping to create a warm and welcoming atmosphere throughout the afternoon.

The Catholic Young Influencers also presented each pensioner with a small plant to take home. This thoughtful gift was intended to remind them of their visit to the event and to bring a little aspect of God's creation into their homes. Our guests commented on what a lovely and meaningful gesture it was, and many said they were deeply touched by the gift.

As a school, we are immensely proud of the close relationship we have built with local residents and organisations since merging on the single school site on Drummond Crescent. Our excellent facilities allow us to host events like this, and we look forward to welcoming guests back again after the summer holidays.

Storytelling

A select group of students were recently invited to take part in a storytelling workshop, culminating in a performance of their own short story, set in Maria Fidelis itself!

Prior to the performance, the students worked through the key basics of storytelling, focusing on 'big emotion' in what they said. After the performance, they discussed the moral of the story, and were encouraged to always have an analytical eye for the subtext in any stories that they read or hear.



FCJ Chaplaincy Programme

Over the past three years, a number of Maria Fidelis staff have been involved in a Chaplaincy programme alongside colleagues from other FCJ schools around the United Kingdom. At the conclusion of the programme in June, Ms Chow and Mr O'Brien travelled with others to Paris, to walk in the steps of the foundress of the FCJs, Marie Madeleine d'Houët. This was a wonderful opportunity to collaborate with other FCJ schools in building up our already impressive Chaplaincy provision for all of our students.



Year 11 Liturgy

On Friday 22 May, just before their final assembly, Year 11 gathered in the hall for a time of prayer and reflection. It was a rather emotional time, with many of them reminiscing and looking back over their five years at Maria Fidelis.

The liturgy began with a speech by the Headmaster, in which he encouraged them all to become “agents for change” in the world around them. He also encouraged them to give serious consideration to teaching!

Mr O'Brien, Sr Anouska and Ms Whelan led short reflections on the past, the present and the future. There were also student-led bidding prayers. The time concluded with a final reflection on the Parable of the Talents.

We pray that the Holy Spirit will inspire them to use their God-given talents to make the world a better place, whatever they choose to do in life. We look forward to greeting them on Results Day on 20 August.

Sacrament of Confirmation

A huge congratulations to Mia-Anne Torres and Olivia Brazil in Year 9 who received the Sacrament of Confirmation on Sunday 24 May at St Aloysius Catholic Church, Somers Town.

During his homily, Canon Jeremy reflected on the significance of them receiving this Sacrament on the Solemnity of Pentecost, when the Church celebrates the coming down of the Holy Spirit on the disciples so that they could go out to the whole world and proclaim the Good News. We pray that, in the words of St Ignatius of Loyola, they too will “go set the world on fire.”



CAFOD Soak-a-Teacher

Our wonderful CAFOD Young Leaders finally got to host their long-anticipated Soak-a-Teacher fundraiser right before the May half-term. After lunch, those who had paid £2 to throw a sponge at the unlucky staff formed an incredibly long queue, causing much distress for Mr Barnwell, Mr O'Brien, Ms Lawson, Mr Ayisire and Mr Maynard!

After an absolute soaking, with Mr Ayisire and Mr Maynard receiving the most hits, the Headmaster took his seat at the front. The crowd went wild! It was a shock and a delight to see Mrs Weston-Peters take two entire buckets and empty them all over him!

A huge thanks is in order for Mr Cruz and Mr Aldridge for creating the headboard and for Mrs Whelan for organising the event. However, it could not have run so smoothly without the hard work and encouragement of the Sixth Form CAFOD Young Leaders. They were so committed to the event, and managed to raise a whopping £482.29 for CAFOD!



Project Green: Stewardship in Action

Below is the speech our students gave at the EducareM exhibition at Westminster Cathedral Hall at the start of July, showcasing the fantastic work they have been taking part in over the past year, which has focussed on the theme of stewardship. We are delighted to share that they achieved 2nd place!



Hello everyone. We are the Catholic Young Influencers, and today we would like to tell you about a project that is very special to us called Project Green. Our school chapel is dedicated to St Carlo Acutis, the first saint of this millennium, and he inspires us because he showed that young people can make a difference in the world.

As Catholic Young Influencers, we wanted to find a way to share our love of God with others through our actions. Project Green is inspired by the Catholic Social Teaching principle of Care for Our Common Home. This teaching reminds us that God calls us to care for creation and for one another because every person is made in the image and likeness of God. Our project is also inspired by Pope Francis' letter *Laudato Si'*, which encourages us to be stewards of the Earth and protect our common home for future generations.

To begin, we carried out a survey with Year 7 students to find out what environmental issues mattered most to them. We discovered that many students wanted a cleaner school, more bins, and more plants and trees around the school. We met Hannaan, the Camden Youth MP, who encouraged us to think about how students can become leaders and create positive change in their communities. We also met Ricardo from CAFOD, who spoke to us about communities in Bolivia and the challenges they face accessing clean water. This helped us understand that environmental issues affect people across the world.



One of our biggest activities was The Big Clean. A large group of volunteers, worked together to make a difference. We designed Project Green badges and these were also given to students who took part, as a way of recognising and celebrating their contribution.

As we looked around the school, we noticed that our garden needed some care and attention. One of the most daunting tasks was contacting Camden Garden Centre and explaining our project. Many of us had never done anything like that before. With help from students, staff, parents, governors, and members of the public, we transformed the space into a beautiful garden that people can now enjoy and reflect in.

In Genesis, God asks us to care for His creation, and working in the garden helped us put that into action. We also planted tomato seeds and donated plants. We organised a tea party in the garden to thank everyone who had helped bring the project to life. In addition, we helped with the pensioner's tea-party and also gave donated plants to the pensioners to put in their homes.



We established our own eco-club and it has been inspiring to see so many students wanting to take action and care for the environment. We raised money through a Soak a teacher fundraiser to purchase a water storage tank so that rainwater can be collected and used to water the garden in an environmentally friendly way.

We learned more about the work carried out by Camden's street cleaners, often starting very early in the morning without much recognition. We designed thank-you cards and distributed them to local street cleaners. The cards included Gospel messages, helping us share our faith through acts of kindness and gratitude.

We designed and led a class liturgy based on St Carlo Acutis and us as Catholic Young Influencers to encourage students to think about how they can be original and not photocopies.



Our vision is not simply to create a cleaner school. We want to inspire others to care for the environment, show kindness to others, and live out their faith through action. We hope to share God's love, make a lasting difference, and leave a legacy that reflects the Gospel call to care for our common home.

As St Anthony said "actions speak louder than words." Thank you for taking the time to listen to us today.

Summer Concert

The Maria Fidelis Summer Concert was a wonderful celebration of the exceptional talent, creativity and commitment of our students. From the opening performance to the final applause, the audience was treated to an inspiring evening of music that reflected the hard work and passion of everyone involved. The programme showcased an impressive array of musical styles and skills, including original marimba compositions, an energetic and uplifting performance from the school choir, a captivating percussion duo whose rhythmic precision delighted the audience, and a stunning virtuoso piano performance that brought the concert to a memorable close.

Events like these remind us of the richness of the arts at Maria Fidelis and the confidence, resilience and teamwork that students develop through music. We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to Mr Rodrigues, whose dedication, expertise and countless hours of preparation made the evening such an outstanding success. We are also grateful to Mr Carreno for his excellent support on guitar, which added so much to the performances. Above all, congratulations to every student who performed with such confidence, enthusiasm and professionalism - they did themselves, their families and our school proud!



Paris & Disneyland 2026

At the end of June, 30 students travelled by Eurostar for a three day trip to Paris, led by Ms Lawson and supported by Mr McReynolds and Mr O'Brien. After our initial outbound train was cancelled, we ended up having to travel on three separate trains, but luckily we were all upgraded to First Class! Upon arrival in Paris late in the afternoon, we quickly dumped our suitcases at the hotel before heading west and to the Eiffel Tower. There was a considerable gasp of awe when the tower



came into view, with hundreds of photos taken to be sent home to friends and family.

That first evening, we all boarded a boat for a lovely cruise along the River Seine. The group took in the sights from the water, with a lovely evening breeze providing comfort from the intense heat of the day. It was wonderful to see the restored Cathedral of Notre Dame, but photos were limited due to a huge advertising billboard having been constructed in the way!



Day two was perhaps the most intense, with us leaving the hotel shortly after 8am and not getting back until well after midnight. This was to enable us to travel and enjoy the rides and rollercoasters of Disneyland Paris. Across the two parks, students went off in small groups to seek the thrills of the different rides. The staff enjoyed themselves too! That evening after dinner, we took our place to witness the simply incredible light show at 10:40pm. Students were blown away by the mix of lights, animations, drones and fireworks, with some even moved to tears.

Day three began with a lie in following the busy day before. After checking out of the hotel, we travelled across Paris to the Basilica of Sacré Coeur (translated to Basilica of the Sacred Heart). After climbing the hill and passing through security, students explored the beautiful side chapels and architecture of this truly historic place. What was so inspiring for the

staff was the number of students lighting candles for loved ones and writing prayers for peace in our troubled world. We had initially given the students 15 minutes to explore, but it took well over 45 minutes to regroup outside!

After lunch, students managed to squeeze in some souvenir shopping before heading to over visit the Arc de Triomphe. The day concluded with some free time along the famous Champs Élysées, before picking up our suitcases and returning to the UK. Many people commended our students for their excellent behaviour. They truly showed Maria Fidelis at its best!



Year 11 Prom

Following the intensity and stress of the summer exam season, our 2026 Year 11 celebrated the conclusion of their GCSEs at Maria Fidelis style with a prom on board a boat along the River Thames. Just like in 2025, the weather did not disappoint, providing a wonderful backdrop for photos, selfies and sightseeing, with many spending the evening on the top deck taking in some of London's most famous landmarks up close.

On the lower deck, both students and staff hit the dance floor. Many students seemed quite surprised at the energy many staff brought to the tunes with their impressive moves. This could not be said for all staff though, and I'd advise some colleagues to practice their moves at home before next year's prom!

The staff on board were incredibly impressed with the politeness of our students, and reminded us that we are the only school they do proms for nowadays, a real testament to the trust they have in our students.

A huge thanks is owed to Mrs Masud and Ms Lawson who have overseen the year group in this most gruelling year of their schooling. They have been tireless in their commitment to our young people, ensuring that they are given the resources and support to achieve the very best they can. We look forward to welcoming Year 11 back on Thursday 20 August for Results Day to celebrate their many successes.



Sponsored Walk

Well done to our student who took part in the annual sponsored walk, raising over £1,600 for the pensioners' parties and The Passage; this included a substantial anonymous donation for which we are very grateful. The Passage is a London-based charity, which aims to form a society where street homelessness no longer exists and everyone has a place to call home. The charity is based on the teachings and example of St. Vincent De Paul, a Christian and social reformer who co-founded the Daughters of Charity in 1633. St Vincent believed in action rather than words and our students lived out this principle by taking part in the walk.



The original walk was planned for Founder's Day back in November but it had to be postponed due to heavy rain. Therefore, our students in Years 7-10 completed the walk on a hot summer's day in July and they showed themselves at their very best. A number of staff were approached by members of the public asking who the children were and what school they went to as they were mature, polite and confident. These are the characteristics we endeavour to instil in the children.

Maria Fidelis
Catholic School FCJ

The Passage 

Everyone deserves a place to call home

Open Evening

We are delighted to announce the date of our Open Evening has been confirmed as Wednesday 23 September 2026. The school will be open between 4pm and 6pm for prospective students and their families to visit, meet teachers and students and have a tour of our fantastic learning facilities.

Mr Anthony will give two separate addresses, with one at 4pm and another at 5pm. These will take place in the hall. Arriving early is highly encouraged as the hall can fill up quickly.

Should you know of any families looking for a secondary school for their son/daughter, please do encourage them to attend.

Alternatively, our school is open for visits and tours every Tuesday morning (term time only) between 9am and 10am. No booking is required, simply turn up and a member of the Senior Leadership Team will show you around and answer any questions you may have. We look forward to meeting you!



Open Evening

For parents and children interested in joining Maria Fidelis Catholic School

Wednesday 23rd September 2026
4-6pm

You are invited to join us for a tour of the School and meet with our teachers and educational team.

The Headmaster will give a talk at 4pm and 5pm.
The last tour will be at 5.45pm.

There is no need to book for this event.

To contact us:
0207 387 3856
admissions@mariafidelis.camden.sch.uk

www.mariafidelis.camden.sch.uk
1-39 Drummond Crescent
London NW1 1LY



Visitation to Harrow School

Nine students from Maria Fidelis recently had the opportunity to spend a day at Harrow School, taking part in a programme that combined history, academic challenge and hands-on scientific learning. The day began with a tour of Harrow's impressive campus. One of the highlights was visiting the Speech Room, where Winston Churchill delivered his famous "Never Give In" speech in 1941. Standing in the room where such an important moment in history took place gave students a real sense of the school's heritage. They were also able to see the many portraits and memorials around the school, commemorating former pupils and their contributions over the years to British society.

Another memorable stop was the Fourth Form Room, known to many as a filming location for the Harry Potter films. Students were fascinated to learn about the tradition of pupils carving their names into the wooden walls and desks, with names dating back centuries. Among them are notable former pupils including Lord Byron and Sir Robert Peel.

The visit also provided a wonderful opportunity for students to experience learning in a different environment through a series of STEM-focused sessions. In Mathematics, students explored the concept of infinity through Hilbert's Hotel, a famous thought experiment that challenged them to think differently about numbers, sets and mathematical reasoning. The session sparked plenty of discussion and encouraged students to tackle some genuinely complex ideas. The biology lesson focused on Darwinism, evolution and blood groups. Students engaged thoughtfully with the topics and enjoyed learning about the links between biological theory and modern science.

Following an excellent lunch, the group spent the afternoon in the chemistry laboratories. Here, students carried out an independent practical investigation to determine the empirical formula of copper sulphate. They carefully measured, heated and analysed samples before using their results to complete their calculations. It was fantastic to see them working so confidently and independently in a laboratory setting, approaching the challenge with enthusiasm and maturity. Throughout the day, our students represented Maria Fidelis exceptionally well. They were engaged, inquisitive and willing to embrace every opportunity presented to them.

We extend our sincere gratitude to everyone at Harrow School for their outstanding hospitality and for providing such a rich and engaging programme. The visit was an invaluable experience for our students, broadening their horizons and encouraging them to think more deeply about their academic interests and future aspirations. We are extremely grateful for the opportunity and hope this visit marks the beginning of a strong and enduring relationship between our two schools.

Report by Ms Ellesawy, HLP Coordinator



T-Level Celebration Event

Students studying T-Level Laboratory Science were invited to the Francis Crick Institute for Camden's inaugural T-Levels Celebration event on Thursday 25 June. The awards evening recognised T-Level students and their placement employers across science, technology, engineering, arts, and math as part of the borough's 'Summer of STEAM' launch.



Sem Nuru represented our Year 13 students, speaking to an audience of around 150 attendees including employers, schools, parents, industrial partners and dignitaries. Sem recounted his experience of T Level and what he hopes to achieve in the science sector in the future. He also thanked his mentors and all the staff who supported him on his journey. We are delighted that both Sem and Maciej Brzeziak have been offered degree level apprenticeships with the Francis Crick Institute and Manchester Metropolitan University starting this September. Congratulations to both young men who are fantastic ambassadors for Maria Fidelis Sixth Form and the school as a whole.

Our Year 12 students who were also represented at the event by Jessica Aquino and Ben Bute were a credit to the school and did a wonderful job sharing their experiences and promoting T-Levels as a real opportunity for our students. They will start their 9-week work placements at the Francis Crick Institute at the end of September, and we know they will have an amazing experience.

Our thanks also go to the team from the Crick, Ellie Horner and Clare Davy, for their unwavering support and we were delighted that they won the Employer of the Year award which was presented by Baroness Dinah Caine. We look forward to many more celebratory events in the future and to welcoming more of our students to the T Level in Laboratory Science.

Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award

Expedition report by Miss Low

On Wednesday 17th June, a group of intrepid Year 10s filed out of school with their lives on their back and took the train down to West Sussex for their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh qualifying expedition. With nothing but a map and a compass to guide them, they trekked through Hundred Acres Wood (oddly nobody spotted Winnie the Pooh - he must have been staying with friends), through Crawley Down and along the Sussex border path to the campsite in High Weald. Ms Holm and I materialised out of the undergrowth occasionally and were impressed to find that they always knew exactly where they were on the map. After their practice expedition in Epping Forest last month, the teams were well-seasoned and professional campers already, and it was a slick operation erecting the tents and setting up the camping stoves for dinner.

The campsite had much to offer in the way of entertainment - ping pong, volleyball, abandoned teepees and an ancient forest full of bats - so an idyllic evening was passed until sunset. Ms McLennon's seven-year-old had successfully worn them all out by chasing them and holding them at water pistol-point, so the students miraculously slept through the night in their comfortable new homes (tents). They rose with the sun and continued on their merry way past Worth Abbey, where they stopped for a quick snack of cherries plucked from a tree (hopefully they were cherries), eventually finishing their expedition down in sunny Balcombe. Everybody passed with flying colours and will hopefully take these skills of teamwork, independence and self-sufficiency with them into their adult lives. I know which students I'll be sticking with come the nuclear apocalypse!

Uno Competition

The school UNO tournament was a fun and competitive event where students competed in multiple rounds of the popular card game UNO. Participants followed standard UNO rules, including matching cards by colour or number, using action cards strategically, and remembering to call “UNO” when down to one card.

Students demonstrated quick thinking, teamwork, and sportsmanship throughout the competition. The event helped students build social interaction, strategic thinking, and confidence in a positive school environment. In the end, the tournament winner was Ahmad Sanusi from 7A.



ZSL London Zoo

Throughout the summer term, a small group of students made several visits to London Zoo as part of a work experience programme. This wonderful opportunity gave those involved an insight into the level of work required on a daily basis to care for the animals, as well as maintain their homes. All the students thoroughly enjoyed their time and we hope to provide a similar opportunity to others next summer term.



Donmar Warehouse

On Tuesday 7 July, Year 10 and the Year 9 GCSE drama class were treated to a wonderful performance by the Donmar Warehouse of their latest production.

Over the last few years, Mr McReynolds has worked tirelessly to build up a strong working relationship with their team, which has involved students receiving free tickets to performances in central London, attending performances in school and supporting the development of the drama club.

This production was particularly engaging, exploring what would happen if students had one hour per day in school where there were no rules! It was particularly inspiring to hear the thoughtful and insightful questions our students asked the actors after the show, demonstrating a clear appreciation of the message.

On the same day, a group of Sixth Formers travelled down to the Donmar for a showing of *The Guilty*, starring Russell Tovey. Staff and students were thrilled by the one-man production, causing much discussion after the curtain fell!

As a school, we are incredibly excited for what the 2026-27 school year brings for our Key Stage 4 Drama Students...watch this space!



Art Exhibition

This term always brings many opportunities to celebrate the great diversity of talent amongst our student body. The Art Department is no exception, with us taking over the local gallery to showcase KS3, GCSE and A-Level artwork that has been designed and produced over the last academic year. Students, staff, parents, governors, locals and FCJ sisters all popped by to admire the wide range of exhibits. A massive thank you is in order to Mr Aldridge, Ms Levin and Ms Vestberg Thomas, whose dedication to our aspiring artists made this possible.



Moving On Event

Towards the end of June, the focus of the KS3 pastoral team shifts to supporting our prospective students prepare for the transition from primary school to secondary school. Each year, Camden Council host a 'moving on event' for Year 5 parents. Essentially, it works like school-based speed dating, with parents moving around the different stalls to find out more about the schools available to them. We are immensely proud of our Year 7s who attended, and were excellent ambassadors for our school.

For any prospective parents, the Maria Fidelis hosts open mornings every Tuesday between 9am and 10am. No appointment is needed, simply turn up and you will be shown around by a member of the Senior Leadership Team. We look forward to meeting you and answering any questions you may have.



Maths Action Tutoring

Over the last two and a half months, Ms Xu has overseen targeted Maths intervention with guest tutors who have visited the school weekly to provide additional support to those who were at risk of underachieving. This project has been very successful, with students building up a great rapport with their tutors.

**ACTION
TUTORING**
infinite potential

Wallace Collection

A group of our Key Stage 3 students were recently treated to a literacy and oracy workshop at the Wallace Collection, one of the city's finest museums, courtesy of the Speakers Trust.

Throughout the visit, students explored the museum's fascinating art and historical collections while developing their speaking, listening and analytical skills through thoughtful discussion, interpretation and collaborative activities.



Rising Star Award!

We are so proud to share that our student-led newspaper team received the Rising Star Award at the recent Shine School Media Awards. They have worked tirelessly in their own free time over the last two years producing Fidelis Today. It is inspiring to see the initiative they have taken and the genuinely captivating editions they have published!



London Marathon

A huge congratulations to Sean Wilson Thomas, who has just completed Year 13. Earlier this term, he took part and successfully completed the gruelling 26.2 miles of the London Marathon in 4 hours, 24 minutes and 3 seconds. Keep up the amazing work Sean!



Year 8 at the Francis Crick Institute

At the start of July, the entirety of our Year 8 cohort walked over the Francis Crick Institute in Somers Town to take part in an exciting and captivating workshop on the topic of energy transfers.

This short trip was described by one Year 8 girl as "the best trip ever" as students were able to see energy transfers happen up close in the most exciting of ways...explosions! There were gasps and applause as the staff at the Crick demonstrated the scientific processes students have been learning about in class this academic year with their science teachers.

We are always sincerely thankful to local businesses and organisations that open their doors to our students, as it can really help bring challenging topics to life in meaningful and memorable ways. We look forward to continuing to work with the Crick next year!

Deloitte

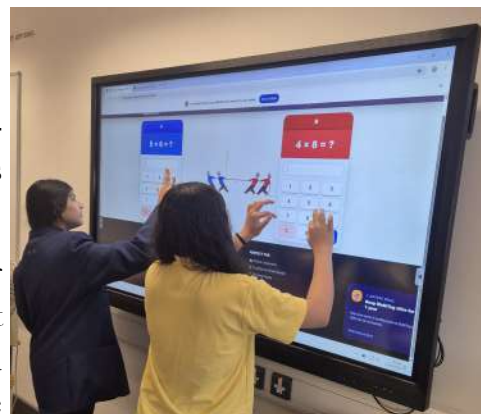
As part of our careers education, Deloitte kindly invited us back once again this summer to bring the whole of Year 10 to their offices in Holborn for a workshop on marketing and careers in finance. These workshops have become a regular feature of the calendar, and students attending thoroughly enjoy the day out.

Tug of Maths Challenge

Year 8 pupils were highly engaged during their recent Tug of Mathematics games with Ms Matviyenko.

They showed great enthusiasm for mathematics, demonstrated excellent teamwork and team-building skills, and worked collaboratively throughout the fast-paced activity. It was fantastic to see their enthusiasm and positive participation.

As a school, we are always looking out for new ways to make the curriculum more exciting and enjoyable.



Geography Fieldtrip

Once again, the next generation of geographers headed over to Epping Forest to undertake their fieldwork, a core part of the GCSE. A fieldtrip is always a great way for students to demonstrate an understanding of, and ability to apply the key geographical and research skills they have been taught in the classroom. This year, students focussed on river discharge. This involved taking measurements of the width, depth and flow of the river. We look forward to their findings.



Summer School

Please take a moment or two to visit the Camden Council website to see all the amazing things going on for teenagers and young people this summer holiday as part of their 'Summer University.'

There are hundreds of different classes, courses, workshops and training sessions available, many for free. These are a great way to learn new skills whilst also making new friends across the borough and beyond!

Debating Competition

On Thursday 9 July, four silver-tongued Year 9 debaters (Mekdem, John, Isabelle and Remy) competed in the Bingham Debating Competition at South Hampstead High School. They were up against 29 other teams, representing schools from across the south of England. They performed outstandingly and won three out of their four debates.

The motions were topical and challenging, requiring students to consider the rise of Gonzo journalism, whether sports organisations should have the power to punish athletes for their conduct outside sports, whether theatres should prioritise funding for new or old plays, and whether young people seeking to make social change should pursue a front line career or one aimed at systemic change. Regrettably, they didn't make it into the final but they should be incredibly proud of themselves.

Speaking in public is daunting even to most adults, and they managed to do it with grace and talk eloquently about some demanding topics. They were also able to meet students from other schools and watch some very impressive school debaters. Well done Year 9!

ARE YOU SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE THIS SUMMER?

Partner with United Borders to provide
extra help where its needed most!

ABOUT US

United Borders is an award-winning London mentoring charity, dedicated to empowering young people and creating safer, stronger communities. We are proudly partnering with the **Youth Endowment Fund** and **Cordis Bright** to find long-term solutions to serious youth violence, while enhancing the lives and futures of Young People.

WHAT WE DO

United Borders provides free mentoring and targeted support for young people living across London. Working from our unique mobile hub and within community settings, we engage young people through -

- One to one mentoring
- Group workshops and activities
- Music, creativity and personal development
- Confidence and resilience building
- Positive role models and trusted adults

We can work alongside your summer holiday provision to provide additional support to young people who would benefit from extra guidance and encouragement.

WHY REFER TO UNITED BORDERS?

Summer can be a challenging time for
some young people

If you are supporting young people who are -

- Struggling with behaviour or emotional wellbeing
- Vulnerable to exploitation or negative peer influences
- Experiencing challenges in the home or community
- At risk of exclusion or disengagement

We can help

Our service is -

- Completely **free** to access
- Delivered by relatable, trauma informed mentors
- Available alongside existing youth provision

- ✓ **FREE**
- ✓ **MOBILE**
- ✓ **LONDON WIDE**
- ✓ **TRUSTED**

WHO CAN WE SUPPORT?

We welcome referrals for young people who -

- Are aged 10-17 and living in London
- Are at significant risk of exclusion, exploitation, or involvement in violence
- Are known to schools, PRUs, youth offending teams, social services, police, or other referral agencies

Referrals can be made by -

- Summer holiday programmes (HAF and beyond)
- Schools and alternative provisions
- Social care professionals
- Other agencies working with young people

FREE MENTORING AND SUPPORT FOR
YOUNG PEOPLE ACROSS LONDON

To make a referral or for more information -
email referrals@unitedborders.org

unitedborders.org



La Fête Nationale! Vive le quatorze juillet

Year 7 and 8 have embraced learning about French culture in their lessons in July on the French Revolution and Bastille Day.

7C participated in a fact-finding activity about the fall of the Bastille and the victory of ordinary people in France over those in positions of power.

Bien fait les enfants!



Gliding Trip

On Friday 3 July, Miss Sowden and Mr Coombes accompanied eight Year 10 students to Cambridge Gliding Club for a fantastic day of gliding. We couldn't have asked for better conditions, with blue skies, light winds and perfect soaring weather throughout the day. Every student had the opportunity to experience the thrill of silent flight in a glider, and it was wonderful to see their excitement and growing confidence. Many were amazed by just how peaceful flying without an engine could be. Tommy described the experience as “absolutely sick!”

Mr Coombes was also lucky enough to enjoy an aerobatic flight, which included an unforgettable loop-the-loop! It was a brilliant day that gave our students a chance to experience something completely different, challenge themselves and create memories that I'm sure will stay with them for years to come. Our thanks go to everyone at Cambridge Gliding Club for making us feel so welcome and providing such an elevating experience.

Prizegiving Evening

As each academic year draws to a close, each department has the incredibly challenging job of selecting students across all year groups to be invited to our Prizegiving Ceremony, which this year was held on Thursday 9 July. This is always a joyful occasion, celebrating the many successes amongst our student body, both within the classroom and beyond. It is a chance to recognise the many ways our students strive to embody the FCJ value of Excellence in all that they do. We were delighted to fill the school hall with parents, carers, staff and governors.

The evening began with a fantastic presentation by our Catholic Young Influencers, Darsh, Debbie and Given, about the incredible work they have been involved in over the last year (see more on p5 and p6). Following this, students were called up individually to receive their awards. It was lovely to hear so many students cheering on their peers! Those present were also gifted with a performance by our school choir and a simply captivating piano solo by Auden in Year 10. The evening concluded with the presentation of the Antlers to the winning house, which this year was d'Houët, led by Miss Thomas. This is the first time in a decade this house has won, and we look forward to see if they can retain this next year!

A huge thanks is in order to Ms Chow and Mr Maynard who spent a lot of their free time sourcing prizes and gifts for those who have been nominated, as well as rehearsing with those nominated for the awards. The event would not be a success without her dedication.

British Museum

As part of our Enrichment programme in July, Year 8 visited the British Museum to explore the incredible collections of historical gems from all over the world.

A particular favourite was the section on Egypt, viewing the sarcophagus up close and seeing the unique way that people were prepared for burial in those times.



Kew Gardens

Wednesday 15 July saw all of Year 9 travel across London to visit the Royal Botanic Gardens, more commonly known as Kew Gardens. It was founded in 1759 and has since become an oasis of beauty and calm. Students were free to explore the diversity of plants and trees from all over the world, reminding them of the beauty of God's creation. A wonderful day was had by all!



A huge thank you is in order to Ms Chow who works so tirelessly to ensure all students are able to participate in various enrichment activities throughout the last week of term. We also want to thank all the staff who supervise and run the trips and workshops!

Staff v Student Football

As has become somewhat of an end of term tradition now at MF, the staff took on another year group at the end of the summer term.

Having watched England get knocked out of the World Cup the night before, a fresh and positive football experience was certainly wanted.

The crowd were amazing throughout, so much so that former Year 11 students and members of the public stopped to watch on through the fence.

At the final whistle, the staff were victorious, thrashing the Year 10s 4-1!

University of Oxford

On the penultimate day of the school year, our Year 12 students enjoyed a fantastic visit to the University of Oxford, spending the day at Hertford College.

The trip began with a tour of the college grounds, followed by lunch in the impressive Grand Hall. Students then took part in a law taster session, exploring the concept of possession and some of the limitations surrounding it, before receiving helpful advice on the Oxford application process and an introduction to life at Hertford College.

In the afternoon, the group visited Magdalen College, where they admired its grand architecture, beautiful hydrangea-filled courtyard, picturesque riverside terrace—where students and visitors can enjoy punting—and the magnificent chapel.

It was a thoroughly inspiring day, giving students a valuable insight into studying at Oxford. We hope many of them will apply next year!

PHOTO GALLERY



May: DofE Practice Expedition



May: DofE Practice Expedition



May: Soak-a-Teacher Fundraiser for CAFOD



May: Year 11 Shirt-Signing



May: Year 11 Leavers' Assembly



May: Year 11 Leavers' Assembly

PHOTO GALLERY



June: Visitation to Harrow School



June: Disneyland Paris



June: Stewardship in Action



June: Art Exhibition



July: Gliding Trip



July: Sponsored Walk

PHOTO GALLERY



July: Bingham Debating Competition



July: Speakers Trust Workshop



July: Year 9 at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew



July: Year 9 at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew



July: Prizegiving Ceremony. Congratulations to Miss Thomas and all of d'Houët House!

SUPPORTING CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH

10 Conversation Starters for Parents

Talking about mental health to children is sometimes hard. To the point that we can put off raising the subject, not wanting to unearth problems or raise overwhelming subjects that we perceive our child is too young or not ready for. But rather than keeping children in the dark, this guide is designed to help you confidently talk about mental health, so they feel comfortable talking about their own worries and end any stigma before it begins.



National Online Safety®

#WakeUpWednesday

1 LISTEN

This sounds obvious, but it is not something we are always great at. Active listening is where we listen without interrupting or making judgements and shows interest in what is being said. If your child feels listened to in the 'smallest of problems' they will become confident that you will listen when the 'biggest of problems' arise.

2 ASK TWICE

The campaign from time to change is great. <https://www.time-to-change.org.uk/support-ask-twice-campaign>. Be tenacious about your child's wellbeing. Children instinctively know when your questions and support come from a place of wanting to help and care.

Are you sure?

4 BE OPEN AND HONEST

Children appreciate honesty, particularly if you are having to share information or talk about a difficult subject. For example, you may be talking about death or loss; 'It's very sad that Nana has died' or 'I feel sad that Nana has died'. How you talk about a subject will differ depending on their age and developmental maturity. Talking about death to a younger child for example will be different to that of an older teen, as their experience and understanding of death is different.

5 KNOW WHEN TO SEEK HELP

Assess the severity of the mental health difficulty you are noticing. Is the difficulty making it hard for your child to function regularly throughout everyday life? How frequently is your child affected, how long does it last and how persistent is it? Are they having problems controlling the difficulty? Talk to your child about your concerns and that it is likely they will need further support beyond family and friends.

6 TALK ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH NATURALLY

Speak about mental health as part of everyday life, so that talking about our feelings and those of others is normalised. If the usual 'are you ok?' is not creating an opportunity for dialogue then say something like 'I know when something like that has happened to me I felt like this... is that how you are feeling or are you feeling something else?'

7 EMPATHISE

'It makes sense that you would feel this way, it is understandable'. Children often worry about things that we, as adults, might see as trivial or silly. However, for them at their age and stage it is a big concern and they need our kindness and care when they show their vulnerability and share their worries.

9 MIND YOUR LANGUAGE

Be mindful of the language you use at home to describe and talk about mental health. Stigma often arises from misconceptions and a choice of language which is harmful. Using the word 'mental', 'man-up' or other such words in a derogatory way won't encourage your child to talk about their mental health for fear of being belittled.

10 IT IS OK TO SAY 'I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO NEXT'

Adults do not have all the answers but often children think they do. It is ok to acknowledge that what your child is experiencing is not something you have come across before or know anything about, but that you will work it out together and seek help together.

Meet our expert

This guide has been written by Anna Bateman. Anna is passionate about placing prevention at the heart of every school, integrating mental wellbeing within the curriculum, school culture and systems. She is also a member of the advisory group for the Department of Education, advising them on their mental health green paper.



Sources of Information and Support

Your GP

Young Minds <https://youngminds.org.uk/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/>

<https://www.actionforchildren.org.uk/news-and-blogs/parenting-tips/2016/november/a-simple-guide-to-active-listening-for-parents/>

<https://www.themix.org.uk/mental-health>

www.nationalonlinesafety.com

Twitter - @natonlinesafety

Facebook - /NationalOnlineSafety

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