

St Gregory's Catholic Science College Newsletter



Christmas 2023

From the Headteacher

This has, I believe, been another excellent term for our school. We returned to the wonderful news in September that our GCSE and A-Level students had, yet again, despite the impact of the pandemic, achieved fantastic examinations results.

Our GCSE results placed us in the top 5% of schools nationally for our attainment 8 score and we were, as you can imagine, delighted that almost 33% of our grades were at grade 7 to 9 (equivalent to the old A* or A grade - the national average was 23%).

In the Sixth Form, 33% of our passes were at grades A* and A, 72% of our passes were at grades A*- B and 95% of our passes were at grades A*- C. Moreover, over 40% of our vocational grades were at Distinction star or Distinction (which is equivalent to an A* or A at A Level). As a consequence of these outstanding results, we have been ranked by ALPs in the top 1% of schools and Sixth Form colleges nationally.

Yet despite all of these fantastic results, the school has not sat back and relaxed. We have continued with our superbly attended revision classes for upper school students (held after school and on Saturday mornings).

There was a huge turn out by prospective parents at our open evening in September; we had a superb prize night in November and, as ever, our school has been highly generous in its support for deserving charities.

In addition, I am delighted that work on our two new teaching blocks is progressing well and that they are on schedule to open early next term.

For all this I am extremely grateful and I would like to thank, as this term draws to a close, the governors of the school, my dedicated and hardworking staff, and our parents and families for the support they give to the school.

I would also like to take this opportunity to say good luck and thank you to Mrs McCafferty, Mrs Choudhury, Mrs Morrison, Mr Breakspear and Mrs McConnell who are leaving the school at the end of this term; and I would also like to send best wishes to Miss Lehane who begins her maternity leave in January.

At this time of year it is clear to me that we have much to be thankful for in our lives.

However, as we enter the final week of term and prepare for our Advent Carol service and final assemblies, I would urge all of us at St Gregory's to remember what a special time the Christmas period is in our liturgical calendar and I hope that St Gregory's students are able to attend Christmas liturgies as a member of their parish community.

Finally, on behalf of the governors and staff at St Gregory's I would like to wish a Happy and Peaceful Christmas to our pupils and their families.

Andrew Prindiville



Mr Prindiville presenting the Y8 Travel Ambassadors Clean Air Day Team with a Headteacher's Award. All pupils who achieved a Headteacher's Award this term are listed on Page 7.

Chaplaincy

During another busy term, our Maranatha choir has provided music for the annual Kenton festive lights switch-on event and has performed with other school music groups at our school's Christmas concert. In addition, they have sung Christmas Carols at St Luke's Hospice.

A large number of Year 7 pupils are engaged with Chaplaincy activities, such as Maranatha and seasonal liturgies, which they have prepared for their year groups. Throughout October (one of the months of Mary), pupils across Key Stage 3 gathered in St Gregory's Remembrance Garden to say the Rosary and in November they also gathered there to offer up prayers of remembrance for the feast of all souls and for Remembrance Sunday.

Our Sixth Form students are taking part in Alpha, a programme designed to provide a space for young people to discuss their faith. They have also volunteered their time to support the Advent giving calendar drive, which saw the chapel flooded with donations for St. Greg's Pantry. In addition, they have taken part in the Sixth Form peer mentoring programme. These students have been instrumental in building a Chaplaincy community where everyone feels welcome and in carrying out the values of Catholic Social Teaching. *Julian Carlsson, School Chaplain*



Pupils praying the Rosary in the Remembrance Garden.



Carol Singing at St Luke's Hospice.

Catholic Social Teaching

This year at St Gregory's, in line with the teaching of Pope Francis, we are focussing on promoting Catholic Social Teaching (CST).

CST is rooted in Scripture, formed by the wisdom of Church

leaders, and influenced by grassroots movements. It is our moral compass, guiding us on how to live out our faith in the world.

As part of CST, we share with our pupils the importance of serving others and promoting social justice. By engaging in acts of service and advocating for those in need, our pupils develop a sense of worth; understanding their ability to make a positive impact on the world. We recognise that our faith calls us to love God and to love our neighbours in every situation, especially those living in poverty.

Each pupil at St Gregory's has a critical role to play in our school to uphold our faith and social justice. As a community at Gregory's we are activists for social change, which has been advocated by Pope Francis as he invites us all to be Missionary Disciples of Christ. Following in the footsteps of Christ, we hope to make present the justice, love and peace of God in our unjust and broken world.

Last half term, the principle of CST on which we focused was Care of God's Creation: As Christians, we are called to be good stewards of creation. That means we are meant to look after the world that God created for us and to work to leave it in a better condition for the people who come after us.

'Creation is a gift, it is a wonderful gift that God has given us, so that we care for it and we use it for the benefit of all.' Pope Francis, Laudato Si.

This half term we have focussed on Solidarity and Peace: In November we remembered, as a nation, those who have died in conflict. Throughout the rest of the half term we have been particularly mindful of the need for peace in the world. We continue to remember those who have died in wars and pray for resolutions to current conflicts. *Mrs Briody, Head of R.E.*



Diocese Christmas Card Competition

In a joint Art and RE initiative, pupils were given the opportunity to enter the Diocese Christmas card competition. Pupils were asked to design an A4 coloured artwork with the theme 'For a child has been born for us' (Isaiah 9:5-6). Lots of beautiful creations were received, from which the Art and R.E. Departments chose 12 finalists and one overall winner, Nolan Lobo (7M), whose design was submitted to the Diocese competition. Well done to everyone who entered this competition and congratulations to our 12 finalists, whose designs have been professionally printed as Christmas cards for sale in school to raise funds for St Greg's Pantry. St Gregory's finalists were: Dwayne Rodrigues 7A & Kaya Lao 7B (runners up); Romina Hyza 7L, Sophie Makeviciute 7H, Erin Hussey 7H, Natalie Iavarone 7H, Menuri Warnakulasuriya Costa 7L, Nia Wilson 7L, Patrizia Cuomo 7J, Alroy Moniz 7L and Kwame Ofosu-Appiah 8A. *The Art & R.E. Departments*



St Gregory's winning design by Nolan Lobo, 7M.

Christmas Giving

There have been a number of activities taking place across the school enabling the St Gregory's community to make a difference for others this Christmas period.

Year 7 pupils were asked to bring in one gift each which could be sent to the Catholic Children's Society (CCS). These gifts will be distributed to local Children, who otherwise may not receive a gift this year.

On 18th December, St Gregory's Maranatha choir brought Christmas cheer to patients at St Luke's Hospice as they performed a variety of Carols and Christmas songs.

Pupils from Years 8-11 were asked to donate one item from the Caritas Advent Giving Calendar to St Greg's Pantry. Donations were collected and sorted by our Sixth Form students.

On 21st December staff and pupils were encouraged to wear a Christmas jumper to school in return for a donation to St Greg's Pantry.

Our Librarian, Miss Boyle, has been running a competition to guess the number of baubles on the Christmas tree in the Library. £208 was raised for St Greg's Pantry. Congratulations to Jessica Kundhuru, 7L who guessed the exact number of baubles on the tree, 188.

As mentioned above, the designs of our 12 Christmas card competition finalists were professionally printed and sold to staff and pupils with proceeds going to St Greg's Pantry.

All money raised from the sale of refreshments at the school Christmas concert will also go to St Greg's Pantry.

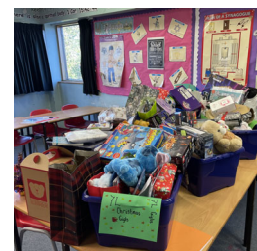
In addition, staff have donated and delivered Christmas food hampers to a number of St Gregory's families. We would like to thank:

Horohoe Construction Ltd who donated £700 of shopping vouchers to St Gregory's families.

Caritas Westminster which sent us £400 of food shopping vouchers for families who use St Greg's Pantry to help them over the Christmas holidays, when the Pantry will be closed.

PMT Print who printed the Christmas cards free of charge.

O'Kane's Irish Foods who supplied the refreshments for our Christmas concert and who donate food to St Greg's Pantry throughout the year. **Mrs Briody & Mrs Hovey**



Christmas Concert

On 21st December pupils and parents gathered in the hall for our annual Christmas concert. Pupils from the School Orchestra, House Band, Guitar Ensemble, Maranatha choir and Year 7 voices performed festive songs and carols to get us all in the mood for the Christmas holidays.

I would like to thank the staff and sixth form students who helped manage the refreshments on the evening and Mr Costigan who designed and made Christmas decorations, which were sold at the event alongside the refreshments, raising money for St Greg's Pantry. *Mr Eccles-Cannon, Head of Performing Arts*



Prize Night

It was wonderful to host Prize Night again at the Kadwa Patidar Centre in Harrow on Thursday 23rd November. The Sixth Form band introduced

proceedings by performing, to a very high standard, two songs from their repertoire.

Our Guest of Honour was Peter Sweeney, Director of Education at the Diocese of Westminster. Mr Sweeney presented our pupils with their trophies, GCSE and A level certificates before an audience of over 600 people including parents, staff, governors and special guests of the school. Mr Sweeney also gave an inspirational speech, which was appreciated by everyone present.

This was a wonderful evening and a fitting tribute to our students for all of their hard work.

Mrs Moran, Head of School



Maths Challenge Success

Sixth Form mathematicians have been very busy this term with several Year 13 students taking university admission tests, such as TMUA and MAT. The Maths Department wishes them all the best with their university applications. Furthermore, many students took part in Maths competitions: Over seventy Sixth Form students participated in the UMKT Senior Maths Challenge in October, with Leo McBride and Nathan Berhane (both Y12) receiving Gold Certificates and qualifying for the follow-up round. Enthusiastic Sixth Form mathematicians then formed teams to participate in the Ritangle team challenge.

In addition, earlier this term, four students were entered into the Maths Olympiad for Girls, a prestigious competition involving a gruelling 2 and ½ hours of mathematical problem-solving. We are delighted to announce that Belle Bautista (Y13) received a Certificate of Distinction, while Louvina Aranos and Mary Ferguson (both Y12) received Certificates of Merit. The school is truly blessed with so many passionate and committed mathematicians in the Sixth Form. *Mrs Fader, KS5 Coordinator, Mathematics Dept.*



SGS Team for the Maths Olympiad for Girls.

Black History Month Careers Talk

On 17th October, the CEO of Young Brent Foundation, Chris Murray, came in to speak to pupils from Years 8 and 9. This was to celebrate Black History Month, as well as to enrich our pupils' knowledge of possible future careers. Chris Murray spoke about how he obtained his role as CEO of the Young Brent Foundation and how he employs people in his team from a diverse background. In addition, he spoke about the impact of the Young Brent Foundation on young people in Brent. Our pupil reviews demonstrate how pupils were positively impacted by Chris Murray's talk and his role as CEO. *Miss Doherty, Head of History*

My favourite thing about this talk was that Chris spoke about his life and how he became CEO of the Young Brent Foundation. I like how he made sure his Young Brent Foundation staff are of different heritages and that the activities are free in our community.

Sarah Pasquale Vila Nova, Year 8

I really enjoyed this talk because the speaker inspired me to reach for my goals as a young black girl. Chris told us how he believes that black history shouldn't be confined to one month and that it should be celebrated all year round. He also talked about his job as CEO and how he is committed to making life better for the youth in Brent. *Blessing Fuka, Year 9*

The talk was very inspiring as it showed the opportunities that young people in Brent have. It shows that whatever your skin colour, sexuality etc. if you work hard enough, you can get jobs in high places. *Twyla Mendes, Year 9*



Literacy and Library

Pupils were asked to submit a piece of writing about 'what Christmas means to me'. There were so many wonderful entries, but the winner of the competition was Seneshka Pereira in 11A. Runners up were Linda Yumi Benicchio Costa (7A), Murel Santos (6WOC) and Casimier Walker (9M). To read their lovely poems, please refer to the Literacy newsletter emailed to parents on 14th December.

We are very grateful to everyone who donated pre-loved books to our Library book drive. Over 400 books were donated, which has helped extend the variety of books available to pupils to borrow and is a fantastic way to recycle. *Mr Griffin & Miss McSweeney, English Department*



Winner: Christmas writing competition.

Debatemate Launch

On 8th November, we travelled to Westminster for the debate mate launch event. As we passed the threshold of the grand doors we were met with scarlet lights and balloons, whilst reading flyers with recent debate topics. Once we reached the arena a motion was given: "This house believes that rap music should replace Shakespeare in English". The opposition was victorious. We learnt quite a lot, ranging from the rules of debating to efficient ways of conveying points. Going forwards, I will be using these methods in my future debates or arguments. *Aneurin O'Brien 7J*



Oxbridge Interview Preparation Course

This term, I attended an interview preparation course hosted by Oxbridge. For my chosen course (Engineering) we went over interview techniques and skills that the interviewers are looking for. We were then split into small groups to work on interview-style questions related to Maths and Physics, which I found both challenging and interesting. I then undertook two interviews with professional interviewers and they gave me feedback from the interviews. This course prepared me for the real Cambridge interview as I gained confidence and an understanding of the skills involved for successful interviews. Other Year 13 students also attended these preparation courses for their subjects. *Belle Bautista 6HUA.*

Brent Climate Showcase Event

On 5th December, St Gregory's Eco pupils were invited to attend a Climate Showcase Event at Brent Civic Centre. Patrick Masterson 9A, Nikola Badora 10B, Murel Santos and Megan Santos (both 6WOC) hosted a stall celebrating St Gregory's many environmental achievements. They also gave away our Eco Advent Calendar and upcycled Christmas decorations, made by Mr Costigan, in return for donations to St Greg's Pantry. In addition, Murel and Megan performed two poems to a large audience. The poems, written by Murel, were a call to care for the planet.

Nikola said, "It was a fun experience, which taught us loads about the community and the environmental initiatives going on in Brent. It was interesting to meet different people with their own ideas and to find out how easy it was to collaborate. I met a lot of people just like me, trying to help the earth with initiatives throughout our schools and homes."

Mrs Hovey, Head of Eco Schools Sustainability



P.E.

Year 7 Boys Football - Unbeaten

Our Year 7 boys football team have made an incredible start to the Brent Schools League and are yet to lose a fixture this academic year. Our captain, Shay McGinley has led the team to three wins and one draw and the team have put themselves in an excellent position to qualify for the next stage of the competition. As the newest recruits to our very successful PE department, the students have all played with outstanding sportsmanship and shown an excellent work ethic to overcome some difficult challenges during some very hard fought matches. The team will continue to work hard in the new term and will hopefully go further in the competition and bring back the Cup in March 2024. *Mr Aristides*



Year 8 Girls Football - QPR Tournament

Our very talented Year 8 girls football team took part in the annual QPR football club tournament at Rayners Lane stadium on Wednesday 22nd November 2023. This was the first time the pupils had played together in an all day event and they performed exceptionally well. The team, led by Katie Keogh (captain), won all of their group matches and progressed to the quarter finals of the tournament. Unfortunately, the girls lost out on penalties to the team that eventually went on to win the tournament. Nevertheless, all the pupils were exceptional throughout the day and showed a fantastic team spirit. This is a really exciting time for our girls football team and their Brent Schools League will kick off in January 2024.

Mr Aristides



Year 9 Boys Basketball

Our outstanding Year 9 boys basketball team are continuing to impress with every match. The team are working hard off the court and attend extra training sessions before and after school on a weekly basis. Their latest result against Alperton finished 57 - 14, with Caleb Kankam scoring 18 points. There is a lot more to come from the team this year and with the same work ethic and determination, we are convinced they will go far in the tournament. *Mr Aristides & Mr Cullen*





Headteacher's Awards



Congratulations to the following pupils who received a Headteacher's Award from Mr Prindiville this term. They are to be commended for their outstanding achievements.

Riva Fernandes 8A – Community Service
 Michelle Annam 10A – Outstanding Independent Study
 Misty Fernandes 10A – Outstanding Independent Study
 Ryan O'Neill 10A – Outstanding Independent Study
 Nikola Adaszek 10B – Outstanding Independent Study
 Bruce Alphonso 10B – Outstanding Independent Study
 Edgar Fernandes 10B – Outstanding Independent Study
 Haegan Mascarenhas 10B – Outstanding Independent Study
 Stacy Fernandes 10H – Outstanding Independent Study
 Gabriel Lao 10H – Outstanding Independent Study
 Suri Hacamo 10L – Outstanding Independent Study
 James Brigo Nunn 10L – Outstanding Independent Study
 Vivian Rozmus 10L – Outstanding Independent Study
 Senuri Costa Warnakulasuriya 10L – Outstanding Independent Study
 Narissa Groombridge 10M – Outstanding Independent Study
 Carensa Iyo-Osa Edebiri 7M - Community Service
 Faustin D'Sa 7J - Community Service
 Emmanuel Ajoy Bobby 7L - Community Service
 Paddy Healy 7M - Community Service
 Michael Owusu-Ansah 7J - Community Service
 Raini Kiara Fernando 7L - Community Service
 Mark Muwonge 9J - Community Service
 Thomas Shwalbe 8M - Community Service
 Royden Falcao 7B - Community Service
 Miguel Aldridge 10A – Green Flag Award
 Ciara Fahy 10L - Green Flag Award
 Amelia Koperczak 10A - Green Flag Award
 Senuri Costa Warnakulasuriya 10L - Green Flag Award
 Nikola Badora 10B - Green Flag Award
 Lauren Byrne 10M - Green Flag Award
 Alex Lojszczyk 10B - Green Flag Award
 Narissa Groombridge 10M - Green Flag Award
 Akisha Travasso 10H - Green Flag Award
 Michael Kelly 10H - Green Flag Award

Adam Oliveira-Daud 10J - Green Flag Award
 Sneedeen Fernandes 10J - Green Flag Award
 Paddy Healy 7M - Community Service
 Amy Molina Lugo 7M - Community Service
 Sophie Makeviciute 7H - Outstanding Work in Food Tech
 Julia Bachulska 10A - Speak out Challenge
 Madeleine Tiu-Alcala 10B - Community Service
 Theo Madanayake 10B - Community Service
 Kacper Puzniak 10M - Community Service
 Daniel Horan 10A - Community Service
 Belle Bautista 6HUA – Maths Olympiad
 Lovina Aranos 6WOC – Maths Olympiad
 Mary Ferguson 6FAN – Maths Olympiad
 Nathan Berhane 6HIA – Maths Olympiad
 Nolan Lobo 7M Winner of Christmas card competition
 Emily Orzol 8B – Climate Change Art Competition (Brent)
 Erin Hussey 7H - Climate Change Art Competition (Brent)
 Eufrensa Pereira 8B - Climate Change Art Competition (Brent)
 Jessica Gerez Llorente 8H - Climate Change Art Competition (Brent)
 Khloe Denise Melocoton 8A - Climate Change Art Competition (Brent)
 Monalisa Ansere Boampong 7L - Climate Change Art Competition (Brent)
 Velenie Rodrigues 8B - Climate Change Art Competition (Brent)
 Riva Fernandes 8A - Clean Air Day Assembly
 Kwame Ofosu-Appiah 8A - Clean Air Day Assembly
 Crizal Braganza 8B - Clean Air Day Assembly
 Cálaeb Ryan 8H - Clean Air Day Assembly
 Samuel Ampomah 8J - Clean Air Day Assembly
 Laura Jasinka 8M - Clean Air Day Assembly
 Patrick Masterson 9A – Representing SGS at Brent Climate Change Showcase
 Nikola Badora 10B – Representing SGS at Brent Climate Change Showcase
 Megan Santos 6WOC – Representing SGS at Brent Climate Change Showcase
 Murel Santos 6WOC – Representing SGS at Brent Climate Change Showcase

Year 11 Achievement Awards

On 28th November, 50 Year 11 pupils received an achievement award from Mrs Moran for making significant academic progress this term. The pupils took part in a special assembly celebrating their hard work and achievements.

Mr Subbiah, Head of Y11



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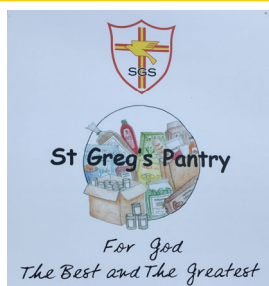
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For God, the best and the greatest



We stock a large variety of long life foods and toiletries as well as a selection of fresh fruit/veg, cheese, yogurts and sliced meat. The Pantry is open during term time on Saturdays from 9:30am—11am. Any family is welcome to use this facility, free of charge, occasionally or regularly.

To organise a visit, email:

ghovey@stgregorys.harrow.sch.uk

Travelling to School

In December the Year 8 Travel Ambassadors presented assemblies to pupils in Years 7-10 about the impacts of air pollution and ways in which we can improve air quality. One way in which we can help to improve air quality is to use more active forms of transport, minimizing journeys using polluting vehicles. The Travel Ambassadors declared Friday 8th December as St Gregory's Clean Air day, asking pupils to walk or cycle to school; to get off the bus a stop earlier and walk the rest of the way and to try not to travel to school in the car. In support of Clean Air day, form groups created a clean air pledge board stating what actions each pupil will take to help improve air quality.

The Travel Ambassadors also conducted a Science experiment in the roads around the school and found significant evidence of Nitrogen loving lichens and tar spots on trees along the roads around the school. These factors indicate pollution from vehicles.

If you have to travel by car, please may we remind parents/carers not to block residents' driveways when parking near school. Please also drive slowly and considerately around the area outside the school and remember to turn off your engine whilst waiting. *Y8 Travel Ambassadors*



No Nuts Please

We have several children in school who suffer from a severe nut allergy. Please could I take this opportunity to remind you that our school has a "No Nuts Policy".

Mrs Camangon, Medical Welfare Officer



What are social media scams?



With online scams on the rise worldwide, particularly at this time of year, it is important we are all aware of what scams are; the common types of scams and helpful tips. Internet Matters has a great information page for parents with lots of useful information. You can find all the information [HERE](#)

If you have any e-safety concerns please contact the school's E-Safety Officer, *Miss McCarthy*.

Upcycled Uniform Shop

Has your child grown out of their uniform? As well as donating items of uniform, which are clean and in good condition, please remember you may also purchase uniform from the shop at heavily discounted prices. We have a good selection of larger uniform sizes available. If you would like to purchase uniform from the Upcycled Uniform Shop, please contact Mrs Hovey via the School Office. Save money and save the planet—buy pre-loved clothing.