

St Augustine's RC High School

Newsletter
December 2019

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Christmas Approaches

As we look forward to Christmas, a time of family gatherings and of giving and receiving presents, our school community has also been raising money for the Caritas Refugee Appeal. This project aims to raise money to support the temporary and permanent re-location of refugees as well as providing funds for transport to allow families to integrate into local communities. We have received support from pupils, families and visitors to school both in terms of fundraising and collections for education packs to support the charity and will continue fundraising in the new year.

Our School Carol Service took up the theme of refuge with readings and carols based on the nativity story interspersed with reflections on the difficulties many families face around the world today. We were also fortunate to have the Lampedusa Cross from Salford Diocese in school during Advent and for our end of term Masses.

Another festive event was the Senior Citizens' Christmas Party. This was a lovely occasion with entertainment from the pupils including music, dance and singing, as well as Christmas Bingo, a visit from Santa and a singalong finale of White Christmas. Year 11 pupils made our guests feel very welcome, spending time talking with them and making them comfortable. If you are aware of an elderly person who might like to come to next year's party, please let us know.



School re-opens on Monday 6th January 2020 (Timetable [Week 2](#))

Uniform Matters

As always, the vast majority of our pupils wear their school uniform with pride and we regularly receive comments from members of the public on the smart appearance and excellent behaviour of our pupils on their way to and from school. Following discussion with the Pupil Council and a meeting of the Governing Board, there will be the option for girls to wear trousers instead of the school skirt early in the new year. We are liaising with our official school suppliers, Ribble Valley Supplies, Gray's and Whittaker's and details of the uniform trousers will be available next term.

A reminder that skirts should be knee length and that socks should at least cover the ankle (i.e. not trainer socks).



SMART WATCHES and MOBILE PHONES

Mobile phones are a feature of modern society and many of our students own one. Smart watches that link to mobile phones are also increasingly common and are likely to be popular Christmas presents for many teenagers this year. The increasing sophistication of mobile phone/smart watch technology presents a number of issues for schools

- ◆ The high value of many phones/smart watches
- ◆ Phones with cameras can lead to potential child protection and data protection issues
- ◆ The use of the phone/smart watch for messaging and receiving notifications that cause distractions in class
- ◆ Inappropriate use of mobile phones/smart watches to bully, intimidate, ridicule others



St Augustine's allows students to have mobile phones in their school bag (turned off) as this provides reassurance for parents/carers and enables them to make contact with their son/daughter outside of the school day. During the school day, **in cases of emergency**, the school office should be the **only point of contact**. School staff can then ensure their child is reached quickly and assisted in an appropriate way.

Any distraction caused by a mobile phone or similar technology will lead to confiscation of the item. **Smart watches should not be brought to school.**



Careers Advice and Mock Interviews

We were delighted to welcome employers from a range of local and regional businesses into school to conduct mock employment interviews with our Year 11 pupils. These interviews form part of a wider advice and guidance programme to support pupils with their ambitions beyond school. Careers Week takes place for all pupils at the end of January with contributions confirmed from banking, finance, science, engineering, digital technology and public services.

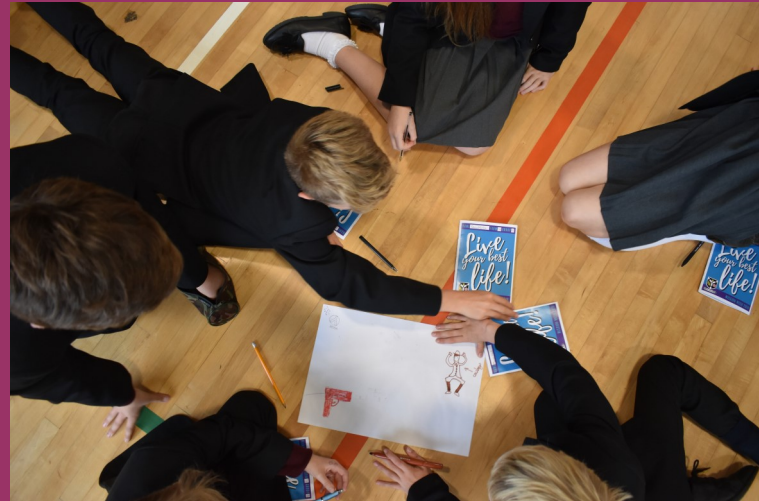
STAFFING CHANGES

The end of term sees us saying farewell to a number of staff. Mr Entwistle, our IT Network Manager leaves to take on the role of Director of IT at Stonyhurst College—we wish him all the best. Mr Johnson will move into the role of Network Manager and we welcome a new IT Technician, Mr Hesketh, in the new year. We also thank Miss Higginson who has been covering a maternity leave in the Science department and Mrs Fellowes who has been covering Mr Pate's Shared Parental Leave in the English department this term. Mr Pate will not be returning to school and we have been fortunate to employ Mrs Baybutt, an English specialist and former Assistant Headteacher, from January 2020. Mrs Gibson from the Pupil Support Team is also leaving at the end of term and has been replaced by Mrs Gregory who will join us in January. Vacancies for all positions in school are advertised on our website and on our Twitter and Facebook pages.

MISSION WEEK

This term saw the school celebrate Mission Week, based on the theme "Live you best life" which concluded with Mass celebrated by Bishop John. Speakers throughout the week included CAFOD, Aid for the Church in Need, Hummingbird Project, Mission Possible (Nairobi), Rainbows, Blackburn Foodbank, Christians Against Poverty, Jumbulance, Preston Street Pastors, Steve Burrowes / Bob Turner environmentalists.

In addition to these speakers the Just Youth group provided prayer opportunities throughout the week, there were year group assemblies by the Live Simply campaign, a Christian rock band, Amongst Wolves, who focussed on mental health and wellbeing and Judith Haymer and Benjamin Gilbert gave talks on anti-Semitism. Pupils took part in an environmental "Dragons' Den" session on product development and climate commitment and there were physical activity session for pupils led by the 180 project and Skate Park. Another highlight was the interactive refugee experience provided by Lee House.



In John's Gospel 10:10 we are shown the purpose of human life is to flourish and encourage others to do the same. Jesus said "I have come that you may have life in all its fullness."

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TRAFFIC AND ROAD SAFETY

Please do not drive onto the school turning circle at the end of the school day when the buses are picking the children up. If you are dropping children off in the morning, be aware that the buses will require the full extent of the turning circle and the area needs to be kept clear to allow the buses to operate safely. Please avoid double parking on Elker Lane as this adds to the congestion around school and wherever possible please try to share lifts with other families.

We have been informed by the residents of the housing block on Elker Meadows (opposite school), that this is a private road and therefore request that families do not use the area for dropping off or collecting children. This is also true for Elker Mews on Whalley Road and the access road to the new house near the roundabout. Please be considerate to the needs of our neighbours.

PTFA NEWS—SAVE THE DATE

As the name suggests the PTFA is made up of Parents / Carers, Teachers and Friends of St. Augustine's. Its aim is simple, to support the school in providing the best possible learning environment for its pupils. It does this by organising fund raising events and using the profits to give valuable financial support to the school. Examples of what our fundraising has achieved include;

- Replacing one of the school mini buses
- Providing equipment for school clubs
- Helping the school purchase a defibrillator
- Providing ukuleles for the Music department
- Purchasing dance costumes

The next PTFA event is the 80s Disco on Friday 7th February. Dig out those leg-warmers and come along!

You can also support the PTFA by joining our 50 / 50 club or visit www.easyfundraising.org.uk where your favourite shops will make a contribution to our cause every time you shop online. Find out more at www.sarchs.com in the PTFA section on the Parents page.



ST. AUGUSTINE'S PTFA

80s Disco

FRIDAY 7TH FEBRUARY 2020
8.00 - 12.00

Fancy dress optional
PRIZES FOR THE BEST DRESSED

BAR - INCLUDING WINE, BEER,
GIN AND NON-ALCOHOLIC DRINKS

TICKET PRICE £5:00
TICKETS CAN BE BOUGHT OR ORDERED FROM SCHOOL

STRICTLY OVER 18s ONLY
PARKING AVAILABLE

GRAB IS BACK!

Once again this year, the talents of pupils at St Augustine's made it very difficult to choose the final four acts to progress to the GRAB event that takes place in the New Year. The four Ribble Valley schools put forward students to entertain the audience at the Grand in Clitheroe, with one act ultimately awarded the accolade of GRAB winner. Our finalists include Tilly Clapham, Jacob Reddy, Amelia Hudson and Honey Booth and we wish them well in the semi-finals where they will perform alongside acts from Bowland High School.

