PARENT/CARER NEWSLETTER

THE BISHOP FRASER TRUST

16 December 2024

Dear Parents & Carers

"But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord" – Joshua 24:15

As we approach the joyous season of Christmas, I am reminded of the importance of family and togetherness. The Bible verse above speaks to the strength and unity that family brings, a sentiment that resonates deeply during this special time of year. Christmas offers us the opportunity to reflect on the blessings in our lives, to share love and goodwill, and to come together as a community.

This term has been a remarkable one across our schools, and I am thrilled to share some wonderful inspection news with you. Canon Slade recently underwent an Ofsted inspection and has been graded *Good* in all areas - a testament to the hard work of staff, students, and the wider school community. Bury Church of England High School has received an excellent SIAMS report, which commended the recent curriculum changes that continue to enrich our children's educational journeys.

I have also been deeply impressed by the enthusiasm and commitment shown by our students in engaging with youth social action projects, supported by funding from the Ormiston Trust. These initiatives have not only fostered a sense of responsibility and community in our young people but have also shown the incredible potential they have to make a difference. I eagerly anticipate seeing these projects grow in the New Year.

Attendance remains a national challenge but I am pleased to report that nearly all our schools are performing above the national averages in this area. For those schools where attendance has been a concern, I am encouraged to see significant improvements this term. Thank you for your continued support in ensuring our children benefit fully from their education.

As we prepare for the festive break, let us carry the spirit of Christmas - *hope*, *generosity*, and *unity* into the New Year.

May your homes be filled with love, laughter, and peace during this holiday season.

Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Tuesday Humby
CEO

Dear Parents & Carers

It is my pleasure on behalf of the Board of Trustees to wish you and your families a peaceful and joyful Christmas.

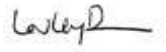
The time since we came back after summer has flown and our young people and staff have worked so hard and are certainly due a well-earned break.

This is a magical time to be in school as we celebrate the coming of Christ with music, drama, learning and fun!

Over the following pages I hope you enjoy reading recent news from our schools and see the fabulous work and opportunities that take place every day.

Everyone at The Bishop Fraser Trust works with one collective aim; to give '*life in all its fullness*' to every member of our Trust family. Please take time to reflect over this festive season on all that your young people have experienced in school and the gift of God's only son which is the true reason for all we do.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



Lesley Durosomo
Chair of Trustees

GABRIELI ROAR PROJECT

Since 2010 the original Gabrieli Young Singers Scheme (re-launched in 2015 as Gabrieli Roar) has worked with selected partner youth Choirs from across the UK, providing their members with an ambitious training, mentoring and performance programme. Giving teenage singers an unparalleled opportunity to engage with the great canon of choral repertoire, inspiring the next generation of performers and audiences.

Earlier this month, the Bishop Fraser Trust secondary schools were delighted to join together as part of the vocal project, all working together towards a final performance at Blackburn Cathedral.

This was a great opportunity for our students to take part in a nationally acclaimed programme to develop choral singing skills, and a chance to work side-by-side with professional musicians from the Gabrieli Ensemble and their Director, Paul McCreesh.

They performed a programme of English music for Parish Churches during the Georgian period, a tradition sometimes referred to a 'Psalmody' or 'Gallery Music'. It was a great opportunity for some of our young singers to connect with choral and classical music, as well as with heritage culture.

Our singers performed amazingly with the Gabrieli Consort and what a fantastic experience for our secondary schools to work together and represent the Trust.

Well done to all the students and staff involved, thank you.

Shining Light on Our Courageous Advocates: A Journey of Youth Social Action

The Bishop Fraser Trust is embarking on a transformative journey of youth social action, supported by the WeWill Project and generously funded by the Ormiston Trust. Rooted in the values of courage, compassion, and community, each school within the Trust is taking unique, impactful steps to enrich lives both locally and beyond. These projects reflect the Trust's commitment to allowing all children to experience '*life in all its fullness*' no matter their starting point.

Bolton St Catherine's Academy is launching a project combining the joy of cooking with a mission to tackle food poverty. By utilising air fryers and teaching both secondary and primary students about the Eatwell Guide and healthy eating, the school aims to break the stigma surrounding foodbanks. Their ambitious goal of cooking and donating 101 meals to Urban Outreach underscores their commitment to addressing local needs. This builds on their past impactful initiatives, such as donating over 1000 tins and tubs of gravy for Urban Outreach 'Christmas Dinner on Jesus' project. This project is a living example of their values – *believe*, *strive, care* and *achieve* encouraging students to embody love in action.

Bury Church of England's initiative ties into their PSHE curriculum, emphasising service to the community, environment and beyond. The project will launch with a shoebox appeal collection in support of Bury Homeless Project's Christmas appeal, providing essential items to those in need during the festive season. Reflecting their values of respect, resilience and reflection, students will learn to care for others while engaging meaningfully with their local community.

Canon Slade is collaborating with the Children Changing Places Project, part of the Bolton Deanery in the Diocese of Manchester. Year 8 form groups will form partnerships with local Churches, which will serve as community hubs for social action. Students will engage in Church specific projects, informed by the needs of each community, and the Churches will join the school for a celebration event. In PSHE, pupils will explore themes of volunteering, preparing them for the Duke of Edinburgh Award and future opportunities. These initiatives reflect *Sladian* values to fulfil individual potential and prepare pupils for life and service in a rapidly changing world.

St Catherine's CE Primary, Horwich are celebrating the power of music and its ability to foster well-being and joy with their "*We Will Care*" project. Through performances and activities, the initiatives will spread positivity across the school and local community. This aligns with the school's aim to be a flourishing community, which celebrates all possibilities through a journey of exploration, engagement and enrichment. Pupils will grow together through the power of music.

St James's is embracing a varied approach with their 'We Will Engage' theme. Each term students will undertake a new project inspired by pupil ambassadors. In the first term, they will collect gifts and raise funds for wrapping paper to donate to the Care Leavers Charity. This will be followed by a second term partnership with Dementia Friends involving fundraising and inter-generational connection events like an Easter service or afternoon tea. The final term will be fully student led, enabling flexibility and creativity. This approach highlights the school's ethos of being accepting, kind, caring, supportive and loving, empowering students to take ownership of meaningful change.

Autumn term at Bolton St Catherine's Academy has been full of new routines, opportunities for new experiences, demonstrations of our Academy values, and hundreds of students achieving their excellence each day. A great term, and one where we have seen students flourish.

Across the Academy we have hosted activities as part of events such as National Recycling Week, National Poetry Day, European Day of Languages, Anti-Bullying Week and World Mental Health Day, as well as others highlighted below. It is always very important to us that we embrace our awareness by holding recognition events, which feed into the curriculum, extra-curricular activities and various lunchtime events.

BELIEVE AT BSCA:

Courageous Advocacy & Urban Outreach Collections - We are proud of our BSCA community when it comes to our charity work, as we have watched time after time, our students, staff members, and wider community come together to collect items and money for our chosen charities. This term our students have taken this amazing fundraising one step further by making a giant leap on a journey towards becoming 'Courageous Advocates' – a concept that encourages us to go beyond fundraising, to becoming more aware and educated on the needs surrounding a charitable cause, and using our voices to help spread awareness, standing up for those in need.

Our Ethos students lead the way by following our three-step process; **'Know It, Say It, Do It'** for our local Charity, Urban Outreach. They went above and beyond, with weeks of research, pulling together action plans, spreading the word through assemblies, creating social media posts and posters, and finally facilitating and propelling fundraising activities across the Academy.

Staff and students rose to the challenge, and we are delighted to report that we have collected 2663 items for Urban Outreach this term!

- Harvest Collection – We collected 1663 tins for Harvest.
- Christmas Dinner on Jesus Collection – We collected 1000 tubs of gravy to contribute towards the hampers.

Ethos students have also visited Urban Outreach to part help to sort the tins collected during Harvest, and to help pack the hampers which our staff will be delivering this Christmas. It has been great to see students be bold in their faith, having hope that we can achieve these ambitious targets, and working together, each playing their part to make this happen and show #CARE to our community this term. We look forward to more amazing acts of #CARE, as we all become 'Courageous Advocates'.

Remembrance Day – Each year we very much look forward to coming together as an Academy in our collective act of remembrance. It is a really special moment when we all gather together and pay our respects. Many thanks to the Head Ambassadors and Reverend Julia who led us in our reflections this year.

STRIVE AT BSCA:

Black History Month - BSCA have held a month long celebration of Black History Month, and have also used this as a time of education and review of processes. At BSCA, we strive to create an environment where everyone belongs, where diversity is celebrated, and all members of our community are educated on the part they play in this. Primary students have read books by black authors, and taken part in PSHE sessions. Secondary students have been feeding back to SLT what they think our response should be as an Academy, and will continue to look at this over the next term. Some of our highlights are below:

Cultural Appreciation Society - The Cultural Appreciation Society have been working on activities linked to Black History Month, which started with students providing the reasons they want to celebrate culture and diversity at BSCA. Some of their responses included:

- *'I am a proud black student, and I want to make sure I am represented amongst my peers. I want to support younger students who may feel under-represented and allow them to see they can achieve what they set their mind on' – Year 11 Student*
- *'Sharing with each other helps us to respect each other's culture, support, and understand each other' – Year 8 student*
- *'I want to help create a vibrant culture which celebrates everyone. I believe everyone should be celebrated, love themselves and know they are appreciated' - Year 9 student*

They have also taken part in a workshop with Bolton Wanderers in the Community, where they looked at racism within football, and completed an art project. This was displayed at Toughsheet Stadium, which the students were able to visit. We are creating a fashion show, faith and culture trail, and beginning a project with the SHADES team from Children Changing Places Project, so there will be many opportunities for students to get involved and support each other over the next term.

SHADES Collective Worship Tour - We were delighted to have the SHADES team visit both Primary and Secondary Phases this term. In our Primary Phase, they hosted a collective worship assembly as well as lessons in Year 5 and 6. In our Secondary Phase, they hosted a week of collective worship assemblies, which had great impact on many of our students.

Our Year 11 Deputy Head Ambassador, Luiz, was asked to provide his feedback for the Manchester Diocese newsletter and we are proud to report that he will be feeding back into the development of future tours over the next term.

Luiz said '*As Deputy Head Ambassador at Bolton St Catherine's Academy, the assembly inspired me to foster a more inclusive school community, even through simple acts like checking on others. The project has made a significant impact, and with continued support and action, we can spread its message of care and equality worldwide'*.

CARE AT BSCA:

Staff Recognition Days - BSCA have celebrated National Teaching Assistants Day, World Teacher Day and Stars in Our Schools Day this term. The students, led by the Year 11 Ambassadors, wrote handwritten notes for every member of staff and delivered gifts for them. The staff appreciated these greatly, and it was amazing to see the students showing real gratitude for the hard work they do. This has been particularly impactful for some of our Ambassadors' who have noticed the number of staff who work behind the scenes to ensure they have every opportunity available to them. They have asked to be able to continue this recognition with a project of their own next term.

World Mental Health Day - On 10 October BSCA turned yellow, as we demonstrated our support for the Young Mind's campaign, HELLO YELLOW across both the Primary and Secondary phases. Staff wore yellow as a reminder of their support to students. We also heard from our BeKindToMyMind Champions who bravely shared their stories during Collective Worship Assemblies. They ran a bake sale to raise money for Young Minds, and to fund a project in school. Independently, they sold cakes to staff and children raising £180.00. This is a great achievement!

As part of Hello Yellow, our Year 11 Ambassadors were interviewed by the BeKindToMyMind Champions, who asked for advice about managing their own mental health, recognising signs they may need support, and how to look out for each other. This was very impactful, and we are looking forward to future collaborations between students as they lead the way in show #CARE to each other.

ACHIEVE AT BSCA:

Cross Country Champions - We are delighted to announce that two of our students have qualified to represent Bolton in the Greater Manchester Cross Country Championships in 2025. Well done to Thomas and Declan in Year 8, this is an incredible achievement!

Story Writing Competition Winner - Congratulations to Amber in Year 8 who has won second place in the Waterstones Story Writing Competition this term. Her story has been displayed in the Bolton Store for all to see, well done!

We post stories on our social media pages and would love you to join us there to celebrate all that takes place at BSCA daily. You can find us on Instagram, Facebook and X by searching 'Bolton St Catherine's Academy'.

SIAMS Inspection - We were absolutely delighted to receive our recent SIAMS Inspection report and share it with our wider community! The inspection resulted in an extremely positive report, and we couldn't be prouder of the achievements of our school community.

The SIAMS Inspector praised the dedication, hard work, and passion of our staff, as well as the enthusiasm and commitment of our students. The report highlighted several key strengths, including:

- Inspired by the school's Christian vision, leaders and staff are deeply ambitious for students and adults at Bury Church of England High School. Passionate about the community having the best life opportunities, leaders have embarked on a rapid, carefully planned journey of development. They have clarity on the strengths of the school and a vibrant ambition for areas they are keen to evolve at pace. This results in a purposeful, inclusive environment, in which students and adults flourish together.
- Leaders are tireless in ensuring that the school is making rapid progress and improvements in realising the vision. The impact of this is especially seen in bold curriculum decisions, changes and enrichment. Together these enable students to flourish while they value their school journey, studies, and supportive community.
- Relationships in the school are a significant strength and encourage each person to 'let their light shine'.
- The vision is lived through a substantial programme to encourage students to be responsible, outward-looking members of the wider community. This increases confidence and skills, helping them to be agents of change.

Although we are in the early stages of our school improvement journey and recognise there is still lots of work to do, this achievement is a testament to the hard work of everyone at Bury Church — from our dedicated staff to our supportive governing body and, of course, our wonderful students. We would like to thank you, our parents and carers, for your continued support and partnership, which plays such an important role in our success.

The full report can be accessed using the link Bury CE High School SIAMS report or via our school website https://www.burychurch.bury.sch.uk/. The report is a true reflection of the fantastic progress we have made, and we are excited to continue building on this success going forward!

Year 11

Mock Interviews Day - Year 11 students participated in a mock interview event, where they were placed in realistic interview scenarios to simulate the ones they will experience in the coming months. The interviewers were independent, and the feedback was overwhelmingly positive. The students prepared and presented themselves exceptionally well, demonstrating notable resilience and strong communication skills.

Local College Visits - Our Year 11 students have had the valuable opportunity to attend presentations from several local Colleges recently. Representatives from Bury College, Holy Cross, The Manchester College, The Football College, and Bolton Sixth Form College provided first-hand information about their offerings, expectations, entry requirements, and extracurricular opportunities.

They actively engaged with the presenters, asking insightful questions, and expressed a strong interest in following up by attending College open events and submitting applications.

Read Aloud at Bury Church - We were delighted to celebrate the success of our Read Aloud Programme, which continues to inspire a love of reading among our students. The programme encourages students to engage with books, share their thoughts with peers, and develop essential writing skills. After completing each book, students write a book review, applying their analytical abilities to reflect on the text. This process not only strengthens their writing but also boosts their comprehension and critical thinking skills, all of which are vital for both academic achievement and personal development.

Recently, we held a special assembly for Years 7 - 10 to celebrate the books read throughout the term. Students were praised for their commitment to reading, and the importance of the programme for personal and academic development was highlighted. We also recognised the best book reviews from each form, with the top reviews from each form and year group being awarded prizes. The outstanding quality of these reviews demonstrated the enthusiasm and skill of our students. We are incredibly proud of their efforts and look forward to continuing to foster a love of literature that will benefit them both inside and outside the classroom.

Blue Peter Badge News - As part of their transition to Bury Church, Year 7 were tasked with reading our chosen text 'A Wrinkle in Time'. Year 7 then were all set for the challenge of applying for a Blue Peter Reading Badge.

This was a fantastic way of introducing our new reading programme to introduce and engage our learners in a range of texts and genres and to allow a period of calm and quiet within the school day, where they could focus solely on enjoying the text and using their imagination.

Twenty-eight students successfully applied for their Blue Peter Reading Badge and Blue Peter commended us for a brilliant effort! Year 7 student Jordon said of our reading programme *'it gives me a period of calm after four lessons*' showing the positive impact reading can have on mental health. This month our Blue Peter readers will attend brunch with the Headteacher, Reading Lead and Head of Year where they will be presented with a certificate to celebrate their endeavours. We look forward to moving onto our Blue Peter Climate Hero Badge through our STEM curriculum - watch this space!

Sporting Excellence at Basketball - Riley S in Year 11 is excelling at Basketball in and out of school. Riley trains regularly each week for Basketball and plays for Manchester Giants who compete at an incredibly high standard. Riley has been selected to represent his club, Manchester Giants Under 16s in a Basketball tournament in Dubai. Riley is one of ten players to be selected to play in this tournament and will also be part of the first team from the UK to take part in this event. Well done to Riley on this fantastic achievement.

Primary School Boccia Event – We hosted a primary schools Boccia event for sixteen primary teams on Thursday 28 November. This inclusive event was organised by the Bury Schools Games Organisers. A group of our Year 9 Sports Leaders helped lead this event and were fantastic. The feedback from the organisers, along with the primary staff who attended this event, was that our Sports Leaders were absolutely brilliant and a credit to the school. This event went really well, and everyone enjoyed taking part and helping out. Well done to everyone involved!

YEAR 7 CELEBRATION ASSEMBLY

Before October half term we marked the official end of Year 7's transition period with a special celebration assembly. Students performed a beautiful rendition of 'Lean on Me' led by Mr Webber. Their performance was absolutely wonderful and was particularly enjoyed by our special guests – Year 6 Teachers and Headteachers from some of our feeder primary schools! The primary staff also had chance to catch up with their old pupils at lunch time and meet with our Heads of English, Maths and Science to discuss transition and plans for future collaboration.

The day finished with a Year 7 Parents' Information Evening with talks from key staff and an opportunity for parents to speak with Form Tutors. If anyone was unable to attend, the presentation is on our website. *Congratulations to our new Sladians!*

HISTORY

Lego Club - Numbers have been swelling for our KS3 History Lego Club! The students meet with Mr Brunsden every Wednesday in C14 and have been creating amazing things. Recently, they have been building on (excuse the pun) their study of castles in History lessons.

A huge thank you to all the members of the local community who have donated Lego to our Club so far, it is really appreciated.

Lessons from Auschwitz - On 10 October five post 16 students had the opportunity to visit the Auschwitz Memorial Museum through the lessons from Auschwitz project. They participated in webinars before and after the visit to help to prepare and debrief them on the experience, including having the privilege of hearing the testimony of Mala Tribich, a survivor from Bergen-Belsen. The students were an absolute credit to Canon Slade and we had many compliments on their attitude and insightful questions. The students will now be taking part in an ambassador programme to share their experiences with the wider school community.

A massive thank you to Mrs Haywood who accompanied the trip.

SIXTH FORM

Year 12 Annual Pebble Challenge – For the third year running, Year 12 took part in the Annual Sixth Form Pebble Decorating Challenge to brighten up our community areas. Year 12 forms competed to create the best design on the theme of 'Canon Slade'. The overall winner was Evie Moores in 12U, whose pebble was selected for its gorgeous design and links to the theme. This will be displayed in the Ashworth House art cabinet, alongside each individual form winner. The remaining entries will be varnished and laid to continue the border in the garden area at Ashworth House, where they will join Sixth Form designs from previous years to give the students ownership of their space and create a lovely focal point.

Sladian Ambassadors – Our Sixth Form Ambassador Award has been renamed 'Sixth Form Sladian Ambassador Award' with four different pathways students can select in order to tailor their gained experience to best suit their needs; Bronze, Silver, Gold (Community) and Gold (Education). Keen to take a leading role in the wider school, a whopping forty-two Year 12 students have signed up to be involved. This Award has been designed to help our Sixth Form students build a range of skills as they complete a series of tasks to show their wider commitment to both their school and wider local community whilst developing the full range of Sladian values. We were proud to see them at the recent Open Evening being such amazing Sladian Ambassadors for our school.

MUSIC DEPARTMENT

Mr Webber and Mrs Tennant recently took twenty-eight GCSE pupils to the Bridgewater Hall in Manchester to see a concert by the Halle Orchestra featuring a range of pieces charting classical music history, including pieces that pupils will be studying for their listening exam. Despite the Manchester traffic (and weather) it was a fabulous concert in beautiful surroundings and a great way to finish the half term.

Singers from our school choir took part in a joint rehearsal with other school choirs at St James's led by Paul McCreesh who directs the Gabrieli Consort, a professional choir who specialise in Renaissance and early music. It was in preparation for a concert featuring school choirs and the Gabrieli Consort at Blackburn Cathedral which was held earlier this month called 'A Georgian Christmas' (see page 3).

Before October half term we had our first ever Morning Recital in the Chapel in which fifteen GCSE and A Level pupils performed a wonderful array of pieces to a captivated audience. We welcomed forty-five Year 5 pupils from Hardy Mill Primary school who were suitably in awe of the older performers!

Thank you to the parents and friends who attended and supported this event.

The next Morning Recital will take place on Wednesday 26 February and will feature the Rowan String Quartet featuring our very own Violin teacher Mrs Evans. Tickets will be available nearer the time.

SPORT

A fantastic start to the academic year for all our students, our extra-curricular Clubs are well attended and provide lots of opportunities for our students to compete locally and regionally.

Years 10 & 11 Netball Teams are both runners up in the Bolton School Netball Tournament
Under 13's are currently undefeated in the SISTERS for Sport National Shield Netball Competition.

Kickboxing Champion Olivia Holt-Lowe in Year 12 attended the Flanders International Kickboxing Cup in Belgium in September where she won Bronze in Flanders which is a fantastic achievement as, at international level, she was against the best of the best.

Year 11 Basketball competition saw our Y11 team beat Bury Grammar in the final to be crowned champions!

Our inter girls swimming team are regional winners in the medley and free style races and are hoping to qualify for the national final …. good luck!

Years 7 and 8 Football teams have made a positive start with local wins. The Year 7 Rugby League team played in the Salford Festival coming away with two wins and a draw while Year 9 came away with three wins out of four!

St Catherine's won the North West regional competition for the National Read Aloud Challenge.

The National Read Aloud Challenge, a highly competitive event, drew participation from schools across the country. The competition, which ran between June and August, aims to encourage children to develop their reading skills and confidence by reading aloud at home. Children's reading was tracked by the Fonetti app and their progress was celebrated in national and regional leader-boards, where things became very competitive!

In recognition of this outstanding achievement, representatives from school have been invited to an exclusive awards ceremony at Amazon Headquarters in London, where they will be presented with an award by Broadcaster and Author Claire Balding.

We were delighted to open our Reading Shed for business a few weeks ago. The Reading Shed is based on the junior playground and gives pupils a wonderful opportunity to continue reading for pleasure at lunchtimes.

EDUCATIONAL ENRICHMENT

Toy Workshop - Year 1 pupils took part in an exciting workshop in school where they explored the kinds of toys children played with 100 years ago and why they are different to the toys we play with today.

Horwich Heritage Centre - Year 2 enjoyed their visit to the Heritage Centre and learnt a lot about life in Horwich in the past.

Environmental Resource Centre at Seven Acres Nature Reserve - Year 3 pupils had a brilliant day outside exploring the natural world as part of their learning in school on rivers. They loved measuring how fast the brook was flowing and identifying the habitats in the nature reserve. It was a cold but fantastic day.

Bolton Schools ICT - Children from Year 4 visited Bolton Schools ICT Centre for a day of creating their own stop motion animations. They had a fabulous time creating their films.

Space Camp – Year 5 enjoyed an incredible 'Space Camp' sleepover at school, tying into their 'Earth in Space' topic. The evening featured a range of space-themed activities, including stargazing through telescopes. The Hall transformed into a cosy campsite with pop-up tents, where pupils enjoyed snacks and a bedtime story before settling down for the night. And while some may have even managed sleep, the experience was truly out of this world.

Dobroyd Castle, Robinwood - Year 6 went on a residential to Robinwood Activity Centre where their adventures included archery, a giant swing, crate challenges, canoeing, climbing, bouldering and surviving the Piranha pool. The residential also involved a bit of sleep!

We have had a lot of fun and success competing in the Horwich and Blackrod's Cluster sporting competitions and festivals this term;

Athletics: Our Year 5/6 team took part in a Cluster competition and there was fantastic effort from every single team member. Football: There was a fabulous team effort from our Y5/6 girls football team at the Cluster tournament, with brilliant team work from everyone! The boys Y5/6 footballers also played brilliantly in their 7-a-side tournament. We also had match play for another of our Y5/6 boys' football teams against Chorley New Road Primary, with fantastic effort and positive attitudes all round.

ROCK KIDZ ON TOUR

The hall was absolutely bouncing with the sound of electric guitars and the cheers of aspiring rockstars as Rock Kidz on Tour brought a full day of high-energy workshops based around the theme 'Nobody Like Me'.

Throughout the day, the pupils participated in interactive workshops led by the Rock Kidz team, engaging in activities based on powerful messages on self-esteem, and diversity.

All staff and pupils embraced the theme, showing up dressed as rockstars for a day that blended important life lessons with the thrill of a rock concert. A team of staff and parents / carers were kept busy all morning using face paints to help transform pupils into Rock Gods and Goddesses. The Rock Kidz team brought a professional rock concert experience to the school which staff and pupils absolutely embraced!! Rock on!

HARVEST IN CHURCH

Year 3 led a meaningful Harvest service at Church, beautifully highlighting the concept of Koinonia — the Christian value of fellowship and community. They reminded us that Harvest teaches us to strengthen our connections with others and to care for those in need.

At St Catherine's, Koinonia is central to our values. Through the generous donations from our families at Harvest time, we sponsor Galgallo, a child in Kenya, via World Vision, supporting both him and his wider community.

In the spirit of Koinonia, our Reception 'Seeds' and Year 6 'Gardeners' extended this message of care and fellowship by delivering flowers to residents in nearby sheltered housing, sharing joy and connection beyond the school.

Graduation Challenge – In September we welcomed our new Year 7 students into the St James's family. They have done so well, and throughout the term, we have been able to celebrate all their achievements and successes.

All our Year 7s are now working towards their Graduation Challenge. The challenge requires every student to join a club, complete reading challenges, and serve generously by taking part in a form charity activity. Upon successful completion of the Graduation Challenge, Year 7 can look forward to a year group bowling trip …. well done Y7!

Harvest Services - During our Harvest Services, we gave lots of thought to our ability to "serve generously." We were delighted to have members of Farnworth and Kearsley Foodbank and the Trussell Trust join us to speak to our students in assemblies about serving our community.

A huge thank you to all our students and families for their generous donations to Farnworth and Kearsley Foodbank, which will help so many people - the van was full!

And thank you to Team RE for organising the collection in school.

Art Workshops - As part of our aim to develop the arts at St James's, we have offered some trial workshops this term where parents can join their children to do something creative together. The sessions have been well received, and it has been wonderful to spend time with parents and expand our creative community. We are looking forward to developing these opportunities further in the future, so watch this space.

GCSE Presentation Evening - In November, we celebrated our annual GCSE Presentation Evening, where we had the pleasure of welcoming back our students to collect their GCSE certificates. It was a delightful event, attended by the Class of 2024 along with their proud parents and carers.

A range of prizes were awarded across all subject areas, as well as for academic achievement. Teachers shared heartfelt comments about the award winners, explaining why they truly deserved their prizes. We wish them all the very best of luck as they embark on life beyond St James's, and hope they keep in touch to share your future achievements.

Thank you to everyone who attended and helped make the evening such a memorable success.

Rewards Breakfast - Each half-term, we will be holding a rewards breakfast for all our students who are 'getting it right.' They consistently demonstrate the right behaviours day in, day out, and we are so proud of them all – well done, everyone!

We look forward to seeing even more of our students at our next rewards event this Christmas.

Keep up the great work!

Interform Competition - Since September, Mr Kohler, our Head of PE, and our newly appointed Year 11 Sports Captains, Mercy and Ria, have been busy organising our Interform Competitions. In these competitions, form groups compete against one another in various friendly events to earn points.

The activities have been very well received, with competitions in Badminton, Volleyball, Chess, and Darts, all using our new equipment. So much so, we now have both a Darts and a Chess club! We've had many champions across each year group and in every competition.

Thank you to everyone for taking part, and for your enthusiasm and Encouragement for your form. We look forward to seeing what our Sports Captains have in store for the next competition!

Spirit Showcase - Our annual SPIRIT Showcase did not disappoint this year! The evening celebrated the Year 10 and Year 11 GCSE Drama pieces, with the first half featuring an abridged version of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and the second half showcasing a series of different vignettes performed by Year 11.

We have some very talented students who both looked and sounded the part! They were supported by our amazing tech team and lighting operatives, who ensured everything sounded perfect and the lights looked epic!

What a great night, capped off with a big reveal at the end: this year, our school production will be *Beauty and the Beast*. We cannot wait to see it!