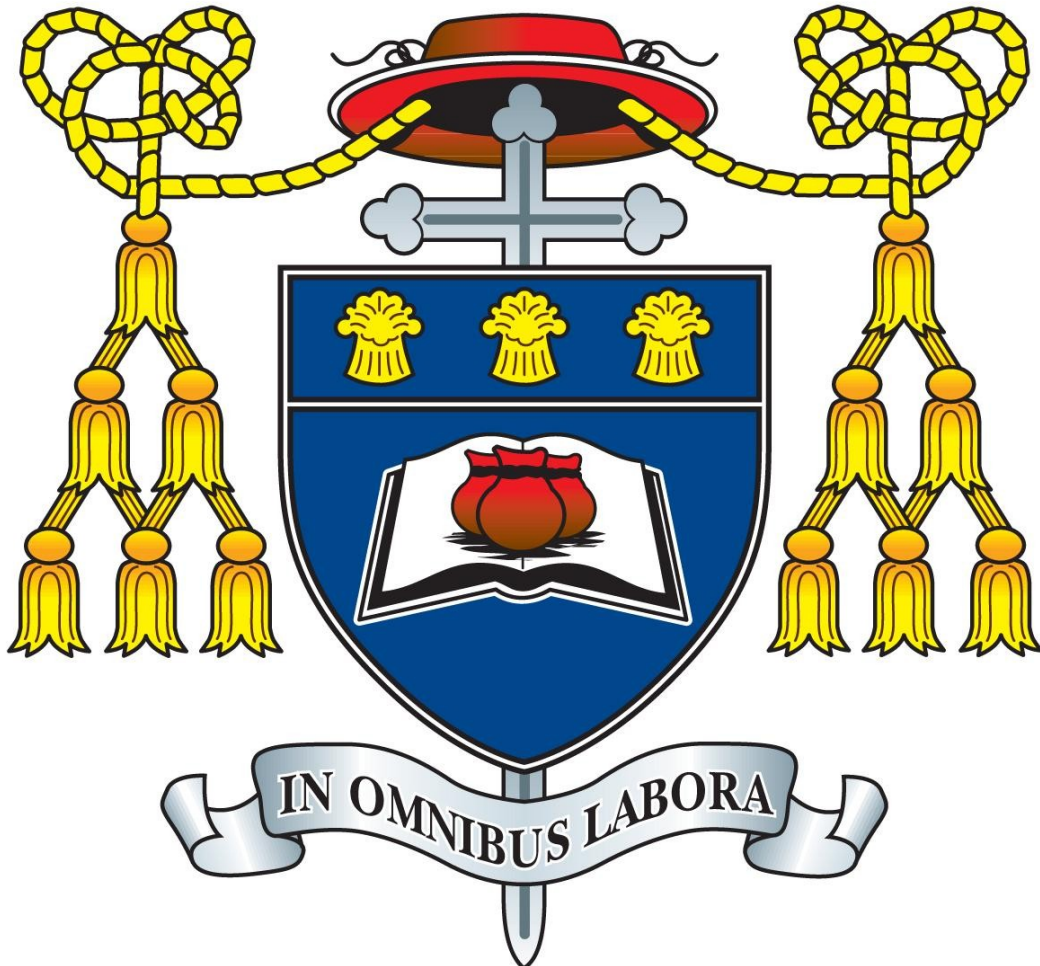


St Nicholas Catholic High School



Head's Newsletter
January 2008

Staff Leavers – Starters

Liturgy

Mass on Wednesday has now been re-scheduled to begin at 12.30pm. This is in an attempt to create an improved opportunity to attend for the Form Group, which is on the rota.

During Residential Week the students organised and led their own liturgies. The feedback which I have received from the school and residential centre staff has been full of praise for the contribution made by our young people. I would like to take this opportunity of thanking my colleagues on the staff who, through their generosity with their time, facilitate these opportunities for the students. Plans are being made for Ash Wednesday and our traditional Penitential Services during the next half-term.

School Trips

During the half-term break there are groups going off on their travels. One party is leaving for Russia while the other is flying to the USA on a ski trip. We hope that all involved have a marvellous time and that they have safe journeys.

Events This Term

A programme was published with my last letter to Parents. I would ask Parents/Carers to note that the school closes for Easter at the end of the school day on Tuesday 18 March 2008.

Uniform

We are seeking to improve the manner in which students are wearing their school uniform and parental support for our efforts in school is very important.

In particular we expect students to be dressed as follows:

- Tie knotted at the collar, showing ten gold bars
- Shirts tucked into skirts/trousers

The school has acquired a new pullover, it's black with the school colours around the v.neck, the material is much more user friendly than the previous version. The Governors' policy does not allow for any other pullover-type item to be worn under the blazer. It has been noted that many students have to be told to remove non uniform items from under their blazers at the beginning of the day. It would avoid escalation to "Bad Comments" being given if they refrain from doing this.

“Going Global” – The Spring Ball

Students were asked to take home a “flyer” regarding the Ball. We really do want to make it a success and the proceeds are going to two very worthy causes, supporting our link schools in Kenya and India and the refurbishment of the school changing rooms. Your school does need your help.

Readathon

During October Year 7 and Year 8 students took part in Readathon. Readathon is a sponsored reading event which aims to raise money for children with serious or terminal illnesses. The event was a huge success and raised a whopping £1,500. The English Department would like to thank all of the students who took part and their family and friends for supporting this worthwhile cause.

Mrs D Buckley

Chewing Gum

I have been contacted by a parent regarding the damage done by chewing gum to her child’s blazer. I have no reservations whatsoever in agreeing with her that school is not the place for using chewing gum. You may recall that I have made this point very clearly in previous Head’s Letters and students have been advised directly by their tutors.

The use of chewing gum on school premises is not allowed and your support in assisting us with this is vitally important. Chewing gum is unacceptable because of the way it has been disposed of on various occasions;

- It makes a terrible mess on uniform and footwear
- It presents unspecified health hazards when deposited carelessly
- It ruins floor surfaces and carpet in school

The fact that this information is available in this letter will serve as a warning to students so that they understand that subsequent failure to comply will result in a range of sanctions being applied, which includes after-school detentions. This decision has been made in the best interest of everyone at school and I believe meets with wide support amongst students, staff and hopefully the parent body.

School Transport

A reminder that the Local Authority expect that all students travelling on services provided must be able to present a valid Bus Pass, every time they travel.

Please remind your son/daughter of how important it is that they remain seated throughout a journey and wear seatbelts where fitted. Students place themselves at grave risk of serious injury or worse if they are standing in the aisle or near the driver’s cabin during transit.

Past Students

The following students successfully graduated from Newcastle University in July 2007:

Helen Louise Duffy	BA Hons, German and Politics
Eliot Timothy Fallon	MEng Hons, Mechanical and Automotive Engineering
Stephanie Anne Power	BA Hons, International Business Management

Iain Morrison successfully graduated from the University of Durham in June 2007 with a MEng Engineering (Civil) degree

Eco Garden

The Eco Garden has now been provided with bird tables and feeders and the birds are being fed daily by the students. A variety of birds have been seen including Greenfinches, Great Tits, Blue Tits and Long Tailed Tits along with Nuthatches. Also, the Great Spotted Woodpecker has been heard but is yet to be seen. There are many ideas which we hope to introduce this year, for example, cameras enabling birds to be watched from various monitors within the school, to enter a national competition for designing an Eco Garden and for students to use the garden at lunchtime.

It would be greatly appreciated if any donations could be made towards the funding of these ideas. Bird feed, bird tables/feeders or any old garden pots are always gratefully received.

Many thanks for your help.

Mr J Brown

Food Technology

We would like to remind parents that the white Food Technology apron is part of the school uniform and must be worn in practical lessons for hygiene reasons. Failure to wear the apron will result in a bad comment in a pupil's diary.

This item was included in the letter that was sent to all Key Stage 3 parents at the start of this academic year explaining a number of issues relating to Food Technology lessons. If you did not receive this letter do not hesitate to get in touch with school to request a copy. Thank you very much for your continued support and cooperation.

The Food Technology Department Staff

News from the Residentials

Extracts from a letter received by the school from the staff at Abbot Hall Hotel to the Sixth Form:

“We would just like to say, on behalf of all of the staff at Abbot Hall, how very much we have enjoyed your stay with us. We have found all of you so very polite and good and, really, you have been a joy to look after.

Thank you for coming to stay and we do hope you have had lots of fun – and that the little holiday was good for you all – both in body and in spirit. We will certainly welcome you again if you are able to make another visit and we wish you all every success and may God bless you all and also your teachers, who must have put a lot of work into all the arrangements necessary to make your stay a success.“

ECDL

Congratulations to the following student who has passed the ECDL qualification:

Robert Alford U6S

Congratulations

Congratulations to Richard Tranter, 11M, who came 2nd in the Triple Jump in the Northern Competition with a jump of 12m 47cm. He is ranked number one in the North West for triple jump in 2008 and number 10 in the country in 2008 - both at Under 17. His jump of 12m 47cm was Vale Royal Athletic Club's record for the Triple Jump.

Senior Mathematics Challenge – a UK competition for 6th formers

Congratulations to:

John Rizkallah for a Gold Certificate and Best in School

Sam Chawner for a Gold Certificate

David Bamber, Victoria Hoolohan and Chris Blachnicki for Silver Certificates

Mark Roberts, Steven Luong and Chris Jolley for Bronze Certificates

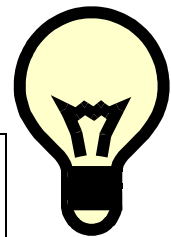
Eco News!

Well done for all the hard work put in by Year 9 girls who were chosen to design, make and sell their own eco-bags. Two fantastic designs have been produced and sold within school with profits going to an environmental charity and eco projects within school.

Lucy Rosa, Clare Towers, Lily Doyle and Clare McKay have shown commitment and enthusiasm throughout the project, well done!



Switch it off!



The Form 7R have been carrying out an energy audit around school with the aim of raising awareness about saving energy!

Pupils are monitoring lights left on in classrooms at break and lunch when not in use and turning them off. Subject leaders will be receiving feedback on how energy conscious their department is.

So remember, switch lights off when they are not in use!

Residentials

Although we didn't go on a retreat out of school, we still had an enjoyable time in school. On the first day we had to build a tent out of newspaper. In the afternoon there were various different workshops that we could choose from such as team building, drama, music and lots more.

On the second day we were in small groups doing several different activities around the school. In the afternoon we decorated a cloth to go around a wigwam. This was a very significant activity as we learnt more about our group members.

Friday was the best day because we made houses out of clay. This was a very hands on activity that we enjoyed very much. Overall I would say this was one of the best experiences of my life.

Savio

In Savio, there were many different aspects of religion that we were asked to consider. We especially enjoyed the amount of free time that was given to us which allowed us to reflect on the day's work as well as enjoying some games with friends.

An important part of the retreat was writing the affirmations, which was a truly enlightening experience. Everyone got involved in various smaller projects such as drama and art. The worst part was having to leave the house at the end of the three days, we had made so many new friends!

Soli House

Before we departed, many of the party were a little apprehensive. Upon arrival we were greeted with many smiles and it looked like there were to be joyful times ahead. Later on the first day we played practical games and were shown the small group we would be in for the duration of the trip. In the evening, after a delicious meal, we explored the house further and discovered the basic ground rules and the practices of the stays at retreat. The nocturnal activities were much appreciated as they were a useful tool to prevent the dreaded early night. The days soon passed and soon it was time to leave. Our favourite activity was the affirmation, where we all wrote positive things about each other. A good time was had by all.

Myddleton Grange

Myddleton Grange was an experience we will never forget. We spent most of our time at the centre, although we had an afternoon when we went for a long walk along the moors which was really refreshing. Some people planted trees instead, which they enjoyed just as much.

On the first day we played a couple of ice-breaking games which were a lot of fun, and we spoke about negative things and feelings going on in our lives and in the world. On the last night we had a meditation in the Chapel, which was extremely peaceful and relaxing. A lot of us fell asleep! On the last day we gave people the positive things we'd written about them. At random, on the first day, we were given someone's name and had to try to get to know them better. Receiving positive things about us gave us a really happy feeling, and made us feel good about ourselves. We did a lot more activities in those few days, like posters on love and what we can do to live more simply. It was an amazing three days and we wished we could have stayed longer! The food was good as well.

Brettagh Holt

We went to Brettagh Holt in the Lake District. It was one of the shorter but one of the best retreats. When we arrived, we were greeted by the staff, who gave us tea and biscuits, which was much appreciated by all after the 90minute journey.

We were shown to our rooms, which were small but cosy. Our topic for the retreat was "Who am I" and we played a lot of team games and had lots of discussions in our groups.

On Thursday night we had a mass which we had spent the afternoon preparing for, that included drama, art and dance. The best part of the retreat was the Affirmation where we all wrote nice things about each other. Overall it was a really good retreat and we all thoroughly enjoyed it and would be happy to go back.

National Storytelling Week: 26 January 2008 – 2 February 2008

Many thanks to the following students for giving up their lunch break to participate in the National Storytelling Week initiative:

The students, accompanied by a member of the Library Staff, went to St Wilfrid's RC Primary School each day where they read stories and nursery rhymes to small groups of reception, Year 1 and Year 2 children. Our presence was well received – the little ones thoroughly enjoyed listening to Chicken Licken, Snore, Kipper and other stories.

Hollie Bark	8L
Anna Carruthers	8L
Daisy Collingwood	8L
Lily Doyle	9M
Philip Fox	L6J
Matthew Heywood	8T
Sarah Jones	9Q
Heather McNeil	8L
Jordan Morris	11S
Samuel Ray	9P
Samantha Roe	11T
Jonathan Vale	L6B

Miss J Davies, Librarian

Congratulations

Congratulations to three Year 10 students supported by a group of their friends:

Jessica Carswell
Rhiannon Wilson
Lauren Rooney

The girls showed tremendous initiative in organising the production of “Little Hollywood”. This was a dance production by a group of Lower School students, co-ordinated and choreographed entirely by the Year 10 group. The production also raised over £400 for the Breast Cancer Charity. Well done girls on this brilliant success.

Nicola Underhill

Nicola is through to the National Final of the Catenian Association Public Speaking Contest for Catholic Sixth Form students having come second in the regional finals.

The title of Nicola’s speech was “You are only young once but you can stay immature indefinitely!”

Elizabeth Hodges – 11Q

On Saturday 26 January 2008 Elizabeth won gold in the 50m Butterfly Open (16+) held at Macclesfield Leisure Centre and is the “North Midlands Ladies 50m Butterfly Champion” and received Silver in 50m Free Style.

Music Tuition

There are, or will soon be, spaces available for students who would like to take instrumental lessons or lessons in singing. If you are interested please see Mr Jones as soon as possible.

Congratulations to Kyran Matthews Upper 6th, on being offered a scholarship to study Music at the Royal Northern College of Music.

The School Orchestra, Choir and various ensembles all took part in the annual Carol Concert – this was Mr Jones’ 25th Carol Concert at St Nicholas.

In March the School Choir will be taking part in its first International Choral Competition in Coleraine, Northern Ireland.

Associated Board Music Results

Summer 2007

Congratulations to the following:

Elizabeth Burgess	VIII	Clarinet	Pass
Kathryn Andrews	V	Violin	Pass
Annabel Rogers	V	Clarinet	Pass
Martha Graham	III	Flute	Merit
Katherine Armstrong	II	Tenor Saxophone	Merit
Helen Fahy	II	Flute	Merit
Olivia Newey	II	Alto Saxophone	Pass
Thomas Price	I	Horn	Pass
Andrew Morrison	I	Piano	Pass
Rebecca Griffiths	I	Flute	Distinction
Alexander Clewlow	I	Alto Saxophone	Distinction

Other Results Include:

Grace Smith	V	Flute	Pass
Marian Taig	III	Piano	Merit
Devon Coverdale	III	Flute	Pass
Devon Coverdale	I	Piano	Pass

Autumn Term 2007

Helen Hunt	V	Theory	Pass
Rebecca Boyle	V	Clarinet	Pass
Charlotte Anderson	V	Clarinet	Pass
Charlotte Baker	V	Clarinet	Pass
Michael Jones	V	Piano	Pass
Daniel Eyres	IV	Clarinet	Pass
Marian Taig	IV	Clarinet	Pass
Charlotte Perls	IV	Piano	Pass
Cian Sothern	IV	Saxophone	Pass
Gabriella Burke	III	Singing	Merit
Sarai Kilshaw	III	Flute	Merit
James Campbell	III	Piano	Pass
Aiofe Powell	III	Flute	Merit
Helen Fahy	III	Flute	Merit
Rebecca Griffiths	II	Flute	Merit
Alexander Clewlow	II	Saxophone	Merit
Imogen Traynor-Barry	I	Piano	Pass
Harriet McIntosh	I	Piano	Pass
Roisin Galligan	I	Saxophone	Merit
Andrew Apanasionok	I	Guitar	Pass
Francesca Brown	I	Flute	Pass

Other Passes Include:

Maya Reid	VI	Singing	Merit
Maya Reid	VII	Piano	Merit
Matthew Leigh	VIII	Piano	Pass

Business & Enterprise College Status Re-Designation

After our successful Ofsted Inspection and continuously improving examination performance the DCFS have granted our re-designation as a Business and Enterprise College until the next Ofsted Inspection. (The status was originally granted for a four year period, but from now on is dependent on Inspection and Examination results). Our thanks are due to everyone involved in our submission which was co-ordinated by Mrs Norman.