



St Gregory the Great Bulletin

Issue 17

Friday 12th January 2018

Welcome back

Welcome back and Happy New Year to all our readers and as we enter the Spring Term we are looking forward to a positive year. I would like to say how delighted we have been with the excellent spirit in which the students have returned following the Christmas holidays. There is a strong sense of focus and maturity and I would particularly like to commend our students for the start they have made. We also extend a warm welcome to new staff: Mr O'Hanlon Teacher of History and RE as well as Head of Year 8 and Mr Monks Teacher of PE.

Before Christmas our students collected food and gifts for the Oxford Food bank as well as the Porch and the Gate House Homeless Projects. A huge thank you to all our school community for the huge generosity shown and for Fran's work within Chaplaincy in organising the collections. The charities were very grateful for all we gave.

Some feedback from our students...

"I feel happy to know that this Christmas people will be eating food that we have donated, food they would not normally be able to afford".

"I think this is a good experience because you can see how much food we have donated and you know that families who get the food will not be going without this Christmas." Year 9 Students



This is an excellent way for our school community to show Christian witness to others.

Mr. S. Tucker (Acting Head of School)

Assembly this week

The theme this week has been: Humility. As we end the Christmas season we give thanks for the greatest gift which we have received, the Lord! We spent time this week thinking about how we can ensure that we do not lose focus of the Lord in our busy lives and also how to make the most of the new year and opportunities which come our way. We are reminded that Jesus came from humble beginnings and it is as well to remind ourselves of how best to exercise that great virtue of humility.

Year 8 Mass

This week 8CCF and 8CMB had Mass in the Chapel with Fr Naz. They reflected upon the journey of the magi and the fresh start that a new year brings.

A special thanks to Jessica Townsend and Freya Barry for leading us in the Liturgy of the word and Stacey Dani, Jamal Elagab, Alica Ward, Fio LI for our bidding prayers.

Next week 8DNH and 8DVMA will have their Mass.

Retreats

Every Child in our school is given the opportunity to go on a residential retreat each year. Retreats offer our young people the opportunity to stop and reflect on the important aspects of life and take time to consider choices and decisions carefully. Students have fun and meet new people from within our own school and other schools. For many this is a trip they count down the day for.

Here is advance notice of the upcoming Residential Retreats in 2018. You can pick up letters from the Chaplaincy Office.

Y11 Kintbury TBA

Y10 Kintbury - 26th - 29th April

Y7 & Y8 Alton Castle - 16th - 18th May

Y9 Soli House 6-8th June

Y11 and Sixth Form Taize (France) - 7th - 16th July

Duke of Edinburgh Award!

We are very excited to announce the launch of the Duke of Edinburgh Award in our school.

The DOE is the world's leading achievement award for young people, and is recognised by employees and universities alike. Working progressively through three awards (Bronze, Silver and Gold) students are required to fulfil four sections at the Bronze level and five with Gold.

- **Volunteering:** undertaking service to individuals or the community.
 - **Physical:** improving in an area of sport, dance or fitness activities.
 - **Skills:** developing practical and social skills and personal interests.
 - **Expedition:** planning, training for and completion of an adventurous journey in the UK or abroad.
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- At Gold level, participants must do an additional fifth **Residential** section, which involves staying and working away from home doing shared activity.

The Award offers young people so much, not least a strengthened resilience, a heightened confidence and a real 'can do' attitude. Social and media skills are honed that businesses are crying out for and a survey of major employers, commissioned by the United Learning Trust, found that a DOE Award is the most highly valued experience when selecting employees.

Year 9 will be invited to enrol on the Bronze Award within the next few weeks and there will be a DOE stall at the Year 11 options opening evening next week.

For more information, please come and see Miss Brooks in the Library.

Two for Oxbridge



Congratulations to Max Oliver for a place at Wadham, Oxford to study Law and Riley Agutter for a place at University College Oxford to study Politics Philosophy and Economics. These places are unconditional and we are really proud of you. Well done.

Sixth Form Open Evening

Next week on **Thursday 18th January** we have our **Sixth Form Open Evening from 7 – 9pm**. Please come along to discover what St Gregory's has to offer. There are a range of subjects and courses to choose from and staff will be able to answer any questions you have about subject choices and life in the Sixth Form.

Last year our Sixth Form achieved the best value added of any other state school in Oxford. This means that if they come to our Sixth Form they will make one grade better progress than if they went to any other Sixth Form.

We are proud to be a widening participation Sixth Form which works to achieve the very best for all in a caring and friendly Catholic environment.

Design & Technology: Lunchtime club and trip to Williams F1

The Design and Technology department are holding in DT3 a Lunchtime club that will run on **Thursday 18th and 25th January 2018**. This will see a group of students design and make a Gravity racer using a range of hand and power tools.

The group will then be lucky enough to have an exclusive tour of the Williams F1 Museum and their Conference Centre in Grove, Oxfordshire on **Monday 29th January 2018**.

The Williams Grand Prix Collection is one of the world's most prized motorsport museums. Housing 38 of Williams' seminal racing cars, the Collection charts four decades of Formula One history and is a suitable destination for some of the finest Grand Prix cars ever built.

The overall cost for this trip will be £15.00 per person covering transport and tour. The Lunchtime club/trip is strictly limited to 15 spaces and places will not be held until payment is received with a permission slip.

Trip letters/permission slips are with Mr Johnson. The **permission slips need to be completed and returned to Mr Johnson as soon as possible.**

If you would like any more information regarding this trip, please contact Mr Johnson.

Could you be a school Governor?

We are looking for a new parent* to join the governors on the Local Academy Committee at St Gregory the Great Catholic School. The governors' role is to support and drive forward the improvement of the school from Special Measures through Good to Outstanding.

We need people who are committed and can spare time to attend approximately 12 meetings a year. We would particularly welcome anyone with experience in Finance or Human Resources, but the position is open to anyone with the drive and commitment to help the school.

Don't worry if you don't have experience because you will receive an induction and ongoing training. Parent governors do not have to be Catholic, though they do need to support the ethos and values of the school. If you want to learn more, please email Dr Robert Bennett, Chair of Governors: rpbennett3@gmail.com by 24th January 2018.

* A 'parent' means all natural or adoptive parents, any person with parental responsibility as defined in the Children's Act, or any person who has care of a child or young person who is a registered pupil in the primary or secondary phases at St Gregory the Great Catholic School.

Important dates:

Thursday 18 th January	Sixth Form Options Evening (for Year 11 students)
Thursday 25 th January	Year 9 Parent / Teacher Evening
Thursday 1 st February	Sixth Form Parent / Teacher Evening
Mon 12 th Feb – Fri 16 th Feb	February Half Term Holiday
Thursday 22 nd February	Year 7 Parent / Teacher Evening
Thursday 22 nd March	Year 10 Parent / Teacher Evening
Thursday 29 th March	Last Day of Spring Term (early closure)
Monday 16 th April	First Day of Summer Term
Thursday 3 rd May	Year 8 Parent / Teacher Evening
Monday 7 th May	Bank Holiday – school closed
Mon 28 th May – Fri 1 st June	May Half term Holiday
Tuesday 24 th July	Last Day of School Year (early closure)

Uniform

It's great to see students arriving each day looking smart and ready for school in their navy blue St Gregory's uniform. Thanks to parents and carers for supporting our new uniform. As the colder weather is now with us for a number of months, can I please ask that all students wear appropriate coats to school. Hoodies are not part of the school uniform and if an extra layer is needed under blazers only the official school jumpers are allowed to be worn.

If you are thinking of purchasing new footwear for school, please buy black leather school shoes *not* trainers. Trainers are only worn for PE lessons.

Remember that students not in correct uniform will be sent home to change, or will work in isolation from other students. We also have a ready supply of second hand uniform which we can provide on a temporary basis if necessary. If your child arrives out of uniform, her/his Head of Year will follow this up with you.