



**St Mary's Catholic College  
Wallasey**

*A Voluntary Aided Academy*

# CHOICE FILLED LIVES

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Part of an **OUTSTANDING** Multi Academy Trust  
(Holy Family Catholic MAT)



# Year 7 First Steps



What an adventure! Kayaking, rock climbing, bush craft, mountain biking and more. 3 days in The Conway Centre with outdoor experts and St Mary's staff allowed our students to get to know each other whilst they faced a range of challenges and developed skills including communication, leadership, teamwork and resilience. We couldn't be prouder of their achievements!



"Conway has helped me be less scared of heights, it really challenged me. It's made me more confident in lessons and I'm now more willing to try new things." Casey-Leigh

"Conway taught me how to be more responsible for myself and I liked getting to know the other people in Year 7" Hope

"It helped me to speak to people I had never spoken to before, I made lots of new friends" Rafaela

## Salter's Festival

in collaboration with LJMU and Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC)

Pupils had to work in groups of 4 on two practical challenges. The main activity was a crime scene investigation where they had to complete some analytical chemistry on different solids and different ink samples. They had to then use their findings and link them to a suspect by deciphering a cryptic code. The pupils were awarded points throughout the day based on the accuracy of their results, practical skill, team work etc. Out of 9 secondary schools from Wirral, Liverpool and Chester areas, our team came 1st!





# Maths Mastery

## UK Junior Maths Challenge



In April, over a 100 pupils in year 7 and 8 took part in the UKMT Junior Maths Challenge. This is a national competition that provides materials to provoke pupils' mathematical thinking and test their problem solving skills in an accessible and yet challenging way. Over 270,000 pupils from across the UK sat the Junior Maths Challenge with the top 6% receiving a gold certificate, the next 13% silver and the next 21% bronze.

A special mention to Jack Blair, 7MT and Rebecca Stanley, 8MK, who achieved a certificate for the highest mark in the school.

The Junior Maths Challenge is run by the UK Mathematics Trust and supported by the Institute and Faculty of Actuaries.



## Working together with our primary partners

Just some of the wonderful children that have visited St Mary's Catholic College this year as part of our Primary Partnership Programme. Each school has selected an area of their curriculum that they would like to enhance by using the expertise and facilities available at our college.

Our staff have thoroughly enjoyed providing these high quality learning experiences and we are already looking forward to developing this programme further next year!

# Maths Mastery

Maths Mastery is a term used to describe a way of teaching maths which enables pupils to achieve confidence and competence – ‘mastery’ – in mathematics.

Through thoughtful practice, support, dedication and hard work, every child can succeed in and enjoy mathematics. Adopting and encouraging a growth mindset enables pupils to develop resilience and confidence and see the value in learning through mistakes and problem solving.

At St Mary’s, we have introduced a number of these principles already into our teaching of Maths. We are looking forward to introducing more Maths Mastery in our classrooms to provide all pupils the opportunity to develop their love of maths and be flourishing problem solvers – in and out of the classroom!

## PRINCIPLES OF MATHS MASTERY

### SUCCESS FOR ALL

Every child can enjoy and succeed in mathematics as long as they are given the appropriate learning opportunities.

### MATHEMATICAL THINKING

Developing the skills to be systematic, generalise, come up with new ideas and seek out patterns.

### DEEPER UNDERSTANDING

Going below the surface to explore and apply ideas enables students to truly grasp the concepts they are learning.

### PROBLEM-SOLVING

Encouraging pupils to identify, connect and apply relevant mathematical principles to solve new problems.

### MATHEMATICAL LANGUAGE

Strengthening conceptual understanding with the language to explain and reason.

### MULTIPLE REPRESENTATIONS

Using objects, pictures, numbers and symbols to represent mathematical ideas and make connections in different ways.



## Mindreader

A little bit of algebra explains this ‘magic’. Ask a friend to pick 3 consecutive numbers with none greater than 60 (say for example she picks 42, 43, 44). Ask her to tell you a multiple of 3 that is less than 100 (for example 39). Then ask her to add the four numbers and multiply by 67, not letting you see the numbers of course, and to tell you the last two digits of her answer. Now you can really amaze her by giving the whole answer and the three consecutive numbers used at the start.

This is what you do. Your friend gives you a 2 digit number and you double it to get the remaining digits. In this case the calculation is  $42 + 43 + 44 + 39 = 168$ ,  $168 \times 67 = 11256$

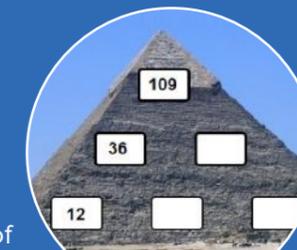
You are told the last two digits, namely 56, and you can immediately give the whole answer 11256.

To get the three consecutive numbers you divide her multiple of 3 by 3 and add 1 (e.g.  $13 + 1 = 14$ ). Subtract this from the two digit number she has given you and you get the first of the three consecutive numbers in question (e.g.  $56 - 14 = 42$ ).

Explain why this works. More information at <https://nrich.maths.org/640>

## Number Pyramids

In a number pyramid, the numbers on the lower layers determine the numbers above them.



Can you complete the Pyramid (each number is the sum of the two numbers directly to the left and right).

Try making your own Pyramid, here are some questions to consider:

If I tell you the numbers on the bottom layer, can you work out the top number without working out the middle layer?

If you change the order of the numbers on the bottom layer, will the top number change?

Given any three numbers for the bottom, how can you work out the largest possible number that could go at the top?

If I give you a target for the top number, can you quickly find three possible numbers for the bottom?

Try the interactivity at: <https://nrich.maths.org/2281&part=>

# Chaplaincy at St Mary's Catholic College

As a proud Catholic school we are committed at St Mary's to the spiritual development of all our staff and pupils. This year our Chaplaincy team have provided a range of experiences which continue to promote the distinctive ethos of our community. Our Pensioners' party has proved as popular as ever with our local residents being treated to a wonderful festive celebration hosted by our pupils. Other events such as raising money for CAFOD through our build a village initiative and our whole school Mass twice a year ensure that we continue to develop young people who aspire not to have more but to be more.

Our pupils have just arrived back from a truly inspirational trip to Rome before other groups leave for Lourdes and the Holy Lands in the next few months.



# Ever Improving Learning Environment

At St Mary's we always strive to ensure that our pupils benefit from the highest quality learning in an outstanding environment. As a result we have installed carpets to all of our main corridors to which the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. Pupils and parents have commented on how it enhances the overall environment and provides an extremely professional feel to the college.

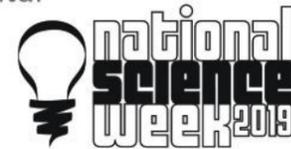
Within the Science Department we have also upgraded our Laboratories to support our ambition of paving the way for our expert scientists of the future. This has already produced results with our recent success in the prestigious Salter competition where we were crowned champions within a strong field of 9 other Wirral Secondary schools.



# Science

## National Science Week

National Science Week has been celebrated in a variety of ways this year, from students taking part in marble challenges to witnessing a presentation on birds of prey, vital learning outside of the formal curriculum for all.



Robots have ruled in Science this term! Mrs Moore's Robotics Club have gained huge success from all their hard work over the term. They entered and won our regional competition which gave them a wonderful opportunity to attend the National Finals in Birmingham. Everyone commented on their hard work and enthusiasm.

## Unilever Bright Futures

Unilever Bright Futures is a competition designed to encourage students to conceptualise, research and design a product for the future. Mr Connolly's Y9 group worked hard, meeting every Tuesday after school from October to March, to come up with their sustainable answer to smelly armpits – Project 12! Their efforts at the final were really impressive and, they have got themselves a CREST Explorer award for all their hard work.



## Physics!

Working with Miss Jones, Year 10 Separate Science Physics students have successfully disassembled and reassembled a Dyson vacuum and its accessories as part of our Dyson Challenge Engineering Experience. In doing so they have demonstrated great teamwork, supported each other and enhanced their natural leadership skills. They now plan to practise their skills by cleaning the department!



## Making Space: Hidden Figures

Mrs Donohue travelled with a group of Year 9 girls to visit the Making Space: Hidden Figures event in order to highlight the vital but unheralded work of many women in science. Hopefully the visit will inspire our students to aim even higher and pursue careers in STEM subjects.

# The STEM Club

Challenging stereotypes - exciting times in Science. Rockets, robots, research, roots and.....vacuum cleaners!

The Science Department continues to go from strength to strength at St. Mary's. This term has been packed with exciting and stimulating activities all designed to encourage our students to realise that real science isn't only found in a textbook.

The Science STEM club, run by Mr. Lewis, have been really busy having fun whilst learning this term. They have made lava lamps, volcanoes, slime and bath bombs, tested soil pH, looked at thermal decomposition and even built mini-houses to test the effects of earthquakes. Other activities have included planting trees from the Woodland Trust at the front of our College and listening to a former student talk about his experiences in the Royal Navy before setting off 'missiles' on the yard. Students went on a successful trip to the Liverpool City Skills Show at Anfield and plans are afoot to attend the 'Big Bang Northwest' science show. Who knows, possibly a trip further afield next year?

Hot off the press, the club have now gained a Woodlands Trust Green Tree Schools Gold Award. The students listened to presentations and took part in activities before planting young trees around the site. Work is now underway to hopefully achieve a Platinum Award in the near future. Congratulations to all involved.



# China Trip

On 18th October 16 students and 2 teachers from SMCC, along with 18 students and 2 teachers from SJP, set off for Shanghai and Taicang in China.

After an early start and a long journey, we were delighted to arrive and immediately set out to see the sights in Shanghai, including the Bund with its amazing skyline and architecture, and Nanjing Road with its fabulous shops.

We had our first attempt at eating with chopsticks (mastered by all eventually) and then checked into our hotel for some much needed sleep! Over the weekend we took in more sights, including the exhibitions at the Shanghai Museum and the beautiful Yu Garden before heading to Taicang where we spent three days in our sister school, Ludu Middle School. Our students were treated like pop stars, signing autographs and being mobbed at every turn. We were privileged to participate in a Mandarin lesson, taught how to play the guzheng (an ancient Chinese instrument) and learnt to write chinese characters in traditional calligraphy. We developed our patience through Tai Chi in the gym, beat our sister school at basketball and tried to master the very tricky art of paper cutting.

Before our departure from our sister school, despite obvious nerves, all our students performed a rendition of Don't Look Back in Anger during the closing ceremony, skillfully played on the guitar and sung with gusto. Students also chose to demonstrate the cultural nuances of Liverpool and Wirral by acting out a poem based on the wonderful city. This was reciprocated by our Chinese counterparts with some fantastic piano pieces, traditional Chinese dance and a short play in 4 different languages!

Our students formed close bonds with their buddies and there were tears when we left the school after three fabulous days. We then returned to Shanghai for some more bartering and souvenir shopping before embarking on the long journey home, all exhausted but full of amazing memories and experiences that will be talked about for a long time!





# The Extraordinary World of English!



Murder and magic and war, Oh my! The English Department have been on a whirlwind tour of extra-curricular activities that have transformed our pupils into actors, public speakers and even published poets!

Our journey beyond the classroom began in November when Charles Lea from Read Now, Write Now joined our Year 8 pupils in honouring the life and works of the World War One poet, Wilfred Owen. They participated in an engaging workshop, exploring his collection of poetry as well as learning about his life from Birkenhead to the trenches. Pupils contributed to the Wilfred Owen 100 Memorial by writing and editing their own war poems. This was celebrated in an assembly where they were able to share their pieces with their peers and discover that they had all become published authors! Special mention to Jordan Spotswood 8OR and Lucia Hitchmough 8VP for their haunting pieces.

Further talent and creativity extended into the New Year when we celebrated World Book Day. A selection of keen writers in Year 8 and 9, led by Mrs Cowdray, attended a private tour and writing workshop in Birkenhead Library. Whilst there, pupils discovered old maps, drawings by Wilfred Owen himself and even made the grisly discovery that this institution was once a morgue!

Throughout the day, all staff participated in Stop and Read sharing the cryptic tale of Anthony Horowitz's The Man with the Yellow Face. Pupils were gripped and desperate for the next section, pleading with staff to continue.

March was a particularly busy time for Team English. The celebrations continued during National Poetry Day when both pupils and staff contributed to live poetry readings in the library. Our Year 13 A - Level students

went to see a production of King Lear whilst 200 of our Year 9, 10 and 11 GCSE cohort descended upon the Epstein Theatre in Liverpool to watch a live production of Shakespeare's Macbeth. This gave the students a fantastic opportunity to see how a GCSE text was transformed from page to stage. They thoroughly enjoyed the experience and we even got a tweet from Macbeth himself inviting us back!

Our March time madness ended with two of our Sixth Formers, Brett Murphy and Luigi Musa - Baldo, participating in The Catenians Public Speaking Competition at Prenton Golf Club. This was a prestigious event where our young adults were given the chance to perform a six minute presentation on a topic of their choosing. Both students served as great ambassadors for our college and worked incredibly hard, impressing judges and members alike. Bravo boys!

While the summer season did not exactly deliver fine weather, our pupils in Year 7 and 8 attended an outdoor production of Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream in Royden Park. Spending time with fairies, dukes and forbidden lovers gave them plenty of opportunities to laugh out loud as well as enjoy a bit of Shakespeare too.

As this academic year closes, we at Team English Headquarters have been inspired, amazed and overjoyed by the poets, writers and actors that have benefitted from our extracurricular opportunities.

Bring on September!

# Follow the Yellow Brick Road

On the 5th and 6th of March our talented students graced the stage of the Floral Pavilion in our annual school musical The Wizard of Oz. Olivia Benson, Kade Van Geffen, Luke Blundell and Luigi Musa- Baldo were outstanding in their lead roles. They were supported by a cast, band and production team made up of students from years 7-13. Our special guests from St Paul's,

Sacred Heart, St Joseph's Wallasey, St Alban's and St Peter & Paul's Primary schools opened the show wonderfully each evening. The talent and professionalism displayed by the students was exceptional and audiences left the theatre full of pride and admiration for all involved.



# Sports Leaders

St Mary's Year 10 students have just embarked upon their first ever Leadership Learning Programme where students have been given the opportunity to express and develop their skills, qualities and characteristics as Leaders in specific sports.

The students have been taught how to deliver, organise and communicate aspects of Sport Sessions and have taken up different roles such as a coach, official and organiser. The aim of the Leadership Unit of Work is to give students the opportunity to try something new within their PE Curriculum and is an extension of the LORIC skills students have previously built through the Key Stage 3 Aspire Curriculum. The objective for students who do well throughout the Leadership Unit is to go out into our partner primary schools to showcase and continually develop their skills by offering their services to teach and run sports practices/ tournaments.



# Careers & Industry Day

This gave the opportunity for students in 7, 9, and 12 to talk face to face with employers/ organisations to see what different progression routes are available. This was also to assist Year 9 with their option choices, as every young person needs high-quality careers, information and guidance to make informed decisions about their future.



# Year 9 Performing Arts Experience - Ingestre Hall

Forty kids, a four century year old house and lots of arts and crafts. What could possibly go wrong? Well, thanks to the fabulous staff and facilities of Ingestre Hall, Stafford, absolutely nothing as the students of both St. John Plessington, Bebington, and St. Mary's Catholic College, Wallasey – both schools being on Wirral, Merseyside – made full, creative use of the state-of-the-art facilities on offer for three days and two nights.

The fun began on Monday January 14th, with the bus leaving at 9:00 am sharp and arriving at just a little after 10:30 in the stunning Staffordshire countryside. The house dates back from the seventeenth century, with the sixth Earl of Shrewsbury who, along with Alton Towers in his property portfolio (pre-Corkscrew etc), employing Capability Brown as head gardener and Sir Christopher Wren to design the family church.

Both the gardens and the church have survived and act as a magnificent backdrop to inspire the non-stop flow of creativity during the coming tutorials, fun and games. There was little rest-bite following the journey either. After dropping bags into luxuriously appointed rooms offering panoramic views, it was down into the main hall to meet the tutors - Rich, Tara, Heather, Felix and Ollie - to learn precisely what it was that lay ahead for the Year 8 and 9 collegiate body.

Nothing much. Just devise, write, record, create, perform, rehearse, design, build, develop, construct, broaden and stretch the themes of Breaking the Mould, Freedom and Revolution through the mediums of drama, visual art, interpretive dance and originally scored music.

## Piece of cake, right?

Well, again, yes, thanks to the focus, drive, imagination and hard work of the students from both schools, not to mention the expertise of the tutors of all disciplines. The fabulous, plentiful, home cooked food helped out too of course. With so much constructive energy being burned, the need for fuel was paramount and Ingestre's caterers certainly didn't disappoint.

Up in art, Heather had her class of six were hard at it, interpreting their themes. Even in the early stages, the sparks of enthusiasm kindled the fires of productivity into a raging inferno, so that by day three all of the completed projects were not only jaw dropping for their school teachers, but also similarly praise inducing from their tutors.

Down in drama, Rich had his team of fifteen or so actors not only brainstorming ideas, but writing the script and developing themes at will so that by the time the performance was staged, the finished product had become a shining gem thanks to the determination of these potential Tony nominees who were not only working hard, they were having a ball in the process.

It wasn't all hard work though. In between sessions there were to be plenty of breaks - and yet more food - during which table tennis, air hockey, bar football, musical instruments, pool and walking in the breathtaking grounds could all be, and were, thoroughly enjoyed. It's amazing how a thirty thousand pound vintage piano can inspire budding Beethovens to tickle the ivories, or how twenty-seven acres of prime, manicured land can instill a love of nature.

On night one, the traditional quiz saw the fierce competitiveness of the arts rise to the surface, before the 3D version of Jurassic World was screened in the on-site cinema. Downstairs in the cellar, Ingestre boasts a fine, fitting tribute to WWI in the shape of its replica field hospital. Rich is the host of this particular attraction, with all of the students fully engaged, captivated and intrigued by the fascinating facts and interactive nature of the whole exhibition.

Into day two, after breakfast and under Ollie's steady guidance, the musicians were busy laying down tracks, building their lyrics and polishing their chords so that by the time their performance times arrived - both recorded in the on-site studio and live - the two songs were delivered with drive and passion enough to satisfy the harshest of Glastonbury critics.

Following a hard day two, the students had chance to wind down for an hour before Disco fever gripped the baron's homestead. Royalty may well have stayed at the hall in the past, but the royal standards of dancing to the beats coming from the fabulous sound system in the Cavern-esque 'bar' very nearly defies description. Most evident, though, was the exuberance, feel good nature and the bonds growing between the students of these two sister colleges.

For those less energetic – or, more likely, more curious – the campanologists of Ingestre church kindly invited two groups of five girls and five boys to attempt both hand bell ringing and, also, the main bells way up in the campanile itself. A once in a lifetime opportunity if ever there was one because even if some do turn to this medieval musical art form later in life, the chances of them performing in a tower designed by the man behind St. Paul's Cathedral, it could be suggested, remain pretty small.

Chief ringer Lynne and her team of Andrew, Hannah, Mike and Phil were more than helpful, explaining the dos and don'ts of bell ringing, which was greeted with two parts awe and one part fear as the ropes rebounded before each pair of eyes in turn.

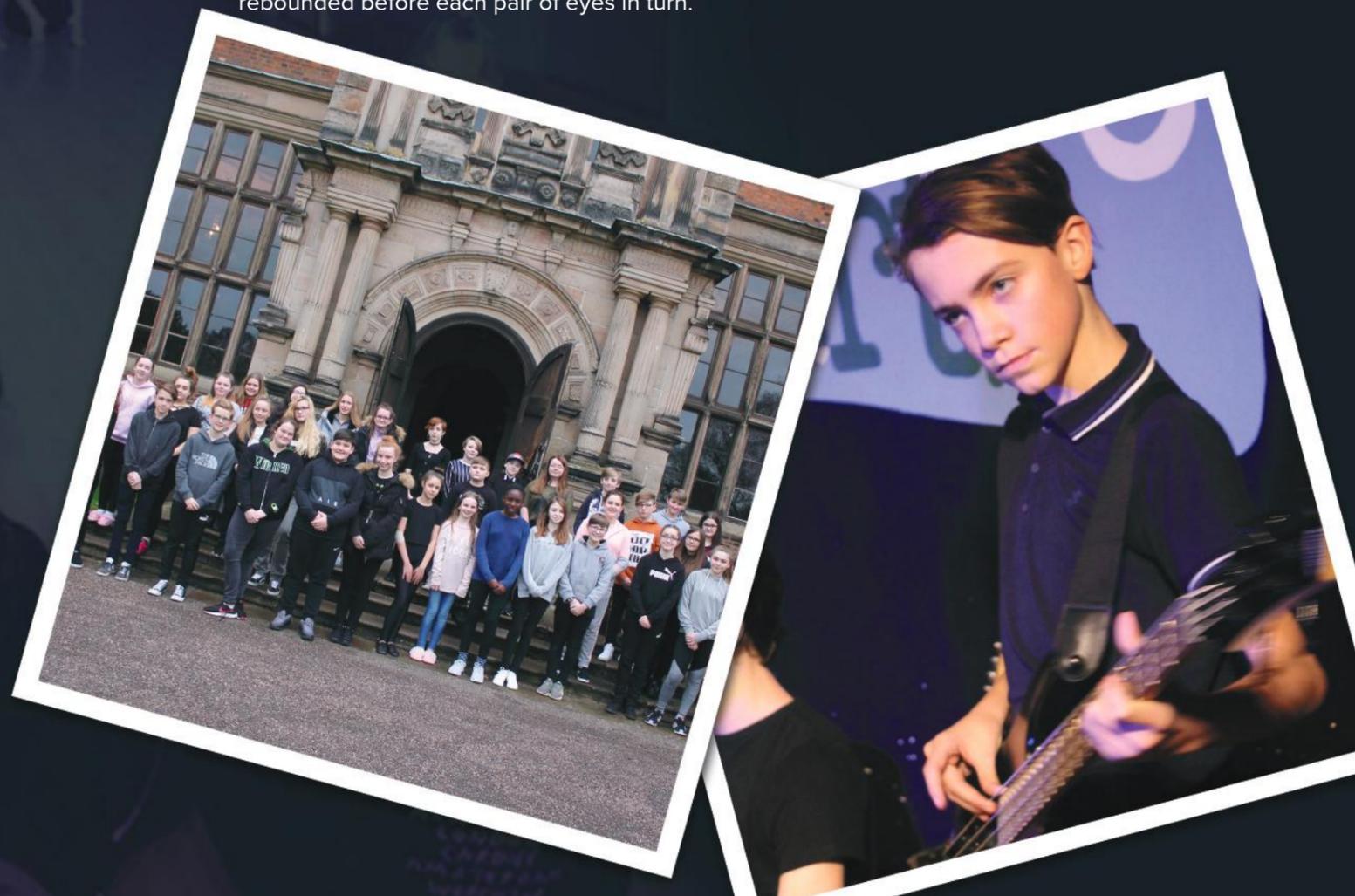
A fabulous experience and one that will be long talked about by those who took the opportunity.

In the dance studio, Tara had her charges leaping, rolling, tumbling and twisting to a soundtrack divided between two parts. The first, an emotionally moving piece surrounding the capture and despair of the overall themes of the sessions as a whole. The second, a pulsing, electrifying and vibrant representation of freedom that fair set the blood ablaze.

With the show cases completed, the suitcases packed and the last of the food consumed, it was time to say farewell to the gloriously appointed Performing Arts Centre of Ingestre Hall - the only such institution of its kind in the UK - until next year.

The short stay was undoubtedly a fabulous, fun-filled feast of educational, informative and inspirational delight that is sure to stay long in the minds not only of those students who participated, but also of those school staff fortunate enough to be able to look after them.

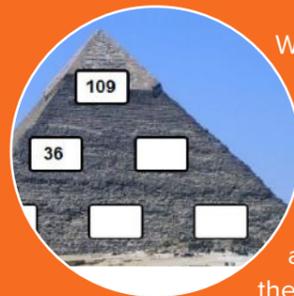
Thank you, Ingestre. It's been a blast!



# MFL – Bringing France and Germany to Wallasey

This year we have been encouraging our students to 'Be more' in MFL and understand their place as global citizens. On our European Day of Languages, students were given the opportunity to eat a European meal in the canteen, enjoying delights such as Frankfurters, Pizza, pasta and Chicken Chasseur. Students also completed a European quiz and won prizes. In lessons year 7s enjoyed a continental breakfast of croissants, pains au chocolat and crepes.

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of Mathematics



We continue to develop our links with Collège Simone Veil in Saint Jory, near Toulouse, France. Years 8 and 10 have been exchanging pen pal letters and next year we have to organise a visit to their school. A group of year 8 pupils' also attended French club during P&A time with Mlle. Gen LaFrance, the French assistant, where they planned, scripted and then filmed a video about Saint Mary's. Our French friends were very impressed with their beautiful pronunciation!



In March we had our annual visit from 35 students from Cäcilien Schule in Wilhelmshaven in Northern Germany. Our German friends followed year 10 timetables for two days and took part in activities with year 9 and 10 students. Many students are still in touch with their new German friends.



## Wirral Cup Champions

Congratulations to our Year 11 Football Team who have been crowned Wirral Cup Champions after a fine display which saw them overcome Caldy Grange Grammar School in the final to secure the cup for St Mary's.

## Health & Social Professionals Event

Last term our Health and Social Care pupils had the exciting opportunity to attend a 'Healthcare Careers Event', where they were visited by a range of medical professionals including a qualified Midwife, Paramedic and a Student Nurse from Liverpool John Moores University. As part of the event, pupils were able to hear first-hand about what training and support can be expected at university, and the exciting challenges that these professionals face day to day, working on the front line of our Health and Social Care Services. Our pupils were well-prepared with their own questions about how topics they are currently studying, such as

'Care Values', will apply in their own future healthcare careers. Following the event, the professionals were keen to comment on their experience at St Mary's, especially complimenting our pupils' behaviour and their enthusiasm to learn about the wide variety of roles available in Health and Social Care. Pupils also expressed how grateful they were for the opportunity, and how hearing what it takes to be a healthcare professional really brought their learning to life.'

## WHERE NEXT FOR ST MARY'S?

At St Mary's Catholic College we are committed to providing opportunities for all of our students to explore the world around them and become global citizens. This map shows a selection of the places we have recently visited or will be visiting in the very near future.



Paris, Berlin, Saint Omer, Ypres, Toulouse, Ancey / Chamonix, China (Shanghai & Taicang), Rome  
Auschwitz, Holy Lands, Anglesey, London, Austria, Krakow, Lourdes, Reykjavik, USA