

ST GREGORY'S CATHOLIC MIDDLE SCHOOL

Living, learning and growing together with Jesus

NEWSLETTER – MAY 2011



MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

Dear Parents/Carers

Here at St Gregory's we are a vibrant community with staff and pupils actively engaged in enrichment activities which help to support the pupils in their learning. I am overwhelmed by the commitment that staff have to a range of extra curricular activities.

As a school community we live out the mission to help those less fortunate than ourselves and pupils have worked extremely hard this year to fund raise for our AVOCA charity. The grand total that we will donate is £2,181 which is an incredible achievement by both staff and pupils. Mr Millie returned from his trip to El Salvador with many examples of the transformational impact that even small amounts can bring to such impoverished communities. It is also our intention to donate articles of unused clothing to Glad's House the organisation that helps the thousands of street children in Mombasa, Kenya.

Earlier this month the Key Stage 2 team, led by Mrs Langley, organised a highly successful Saturday school. Thirty seven pupils came along for a fun morning of revision activities which helped in the final preparation for the Year 6 SATs. There was a tremendous sense of engagement as staff and pupils worked together on active revision techniques. Several pupils asked if Saturday school could be a regular feature - now there's a thought!

There is a Science trip to the Space Camp in Belgium over the May half term, organised by Miss Bremner. The party of twenty five will be immersed fully in the amazing Space Camp experience. They will be setting up a blog on the school website so that we can follow their progress and share in their exciting experiences. This follows on from an exceptional Science competition which was held this week, congratulations to all of the competitors who impressed the judges with their detailed and confident presentations.

Later this term there are forty one pupils travelling to Dieppe staying at the glorious Chateau de Chantereine. Mrs Fielder has organised a range of cultural activities including a visit to the World War One Memorial at Vimy Ridge, a day out in Rouen which has a shrine to Joan of Arc and what will also be very popular, a visit to a chocolate factory!

We have continued our sporting successes this term with the Under 12 footballers being presented with the County Cup trophy. It was a highly significant moment as it is the first time in the school's fifty year history that this has been achieved. The team also had the remarkable opportunity to play at the Luton Town football stadium where they reached the quarter finals.

Our congratulation also go to our star Year 8 athlete, Sarah Kerr, who is the reigning County 1500 metre Champion. She won the final by an incredible twenty seconds and is destined for even more success as the athletics season gets underway.

We continue to work hard with the other schools in the Catholic Federation and have a number of joint activities planned for next half term. I am sure that you have seen from Dr Lee's newsletter how many successful initiatives are already underway.

Do make a note in your diaries for the School Show, which will be performed on Monday, 18 and Tuesday, 19 July. Auditions are underway and rehearsals will start after half term. I am sure it will be another spectacular success involving all year groups.

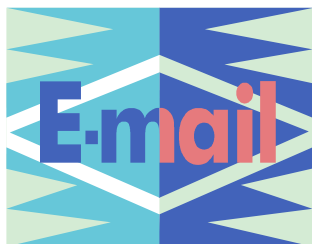
My thanks to pupils, staff, parents and governors whose contribution to all aspects of school life make St Gregory's such a thriving community.

Frances Topa
Headteacher

ICT NEWS

Calling Year 7 Parents

Would you like take part in a trial giving you on-line access to daily attendance, achievement and behaviour information? You will need to have daily access to a computer, be willing to attend a couple of meetings



at school (a planning meeting and a review meeting) and willing to offer suggestions about what you would like to have access to. If this sounds like you then please email the school before 6 June at enquiries@st-gregorys.beds.sch.uk indicating which evening would be most convenient for you to come in for a 7.00pm meeting. When we have the responses we'll be in touch with a date.

YEARBOOK

The year 8 Yearbook is nearly ready for publication. A big thank you to those of you who have ordered a copy already. If you still want to order one they cost £13.00 and the money should be brought to the school office by 8 June at the latest. We will not be able to order additional copies after that time so unfortunately late orders will not be accepted.

PTA

Summer Disco is on Friday, 17 June.

The mufti money from that day will be used to improve lunchtime and rainy day classroom games and play equipment. Pupils can either bring £1 for mufti or bring in a used, but complete game, puzzle, skipping rope, lego or any other outdoor/indoor game which they do not use any more at home.



The PTA has already purchased some play equipment for lunch time play, but would like to organise more. If pupils have good ideas for equipment / games please let their School Council representative know.

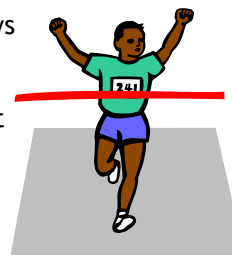
Many thanks to all pupils and parents who have supported events this year, either by helping or taking part. We have an ever increasing group of regular helpers and we enjoyed our first PTA social night at the Three Tuns in Biddenham this term, with a further social event being planned for next term. We will be present with our tea urn and biscuits at the gymnastic display and new intake parents' evening, so it's never too late to help out, just let me know through the school office.

The money raised has been used to buy collapsible pergolas for shade or rain cover for sporting events. We will be meeting most of the cost for the Year 8 Leavers' Party. We are sponsoring the cost of the Science Fayre and contributed to the costs of the Science trip to Belgium. In addition each class has access to more funding to help with the cost of school trips or special events planned by their teachers.

PE

It has once again been an extremely busy half term for PE. Our Key Stage 3 girls have been competing against other district schools in Rounders with consistently good results.

Both our girls and boys athletics teams have been busy on Tuesday evenings competing in the District League, particularly mentionable performances have come from Sarah Kerr (1500m), Sofia Quarta (Long Jump/100m), Connor Swaine (Long Jump), Daryl Geanga (1500m) and we look forward to the District meeting at the Track in Barkers Lane in June with eager anticipation.



We finally finished what seemed an incredibly long and successful football season when the Year 6s competed in the County Cup play-offs and ended up coming 3rd. Congratulations to all boys involved!

The current County Champions (Year 7 boys' football) had the privilege of playing on Luton Town's pitch in a 6 a-side tournament recently, narrowly missing out on penalties.

A couple of dates for your diaries:

Gym Display on Tuesday, 7 July at 7.00pm
Summer Sports Day on Friday, 15 July. All parents are welcome to attend for the afternoon events, beginning at 1.00pm.

POETRY WRITING COMPETITION

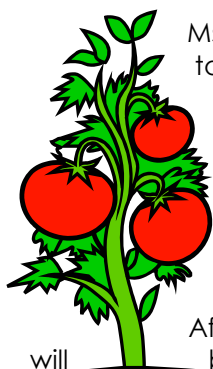
Yet again St Gregory's have proved that it has some very gifted and talented writers. Pupils from 8C entered a national poetry writing competition. 11 pupils were successful and have been invited to have their poem published.

Congratulations to: Bethany Moan, Khadeja Fatima, Monica Fitzgerald, Chanelle Sutherland-Walton, Jo-Anne Suliali, Conor Archer, Mateusz Swierczek, Suraj Ram, Lauren Ngabo, Jessica Palmer and Molly Jun. Well done!

TRANSFER, TRANSFER, TRANSFER

This is a very busy time of the year at St Gregory's, as we prepare our Year 8 pupils for transfer to Upper School and get ourselves ready to receive new pupils in September.

As part of this process I have been lucky enough to work with a small group of Year 8 pupils to support them with their move. We have visited St Thomas More on several occasions, enabling the pupils to meet not only the staff, but also pupils transferring from other local Middle schools. During these visits the pupils have had a tour of the school, baked some delicious fairy cakes and planted some seeds to bring back to St Gregory's. Each child also planted a tomato plant seed so each time the pupils visit STM they can check on their plant's progress.



Ms Topa and I also planted tomato plant seeds and are having a competition to see which grows the best. I think hers is in the lead at the moment but mine is trying hard! We will keep you up to date.

After half term Mrs Langley and I will be visiting some of our feeder Lower schools to meet pupils who will be transferring here in September. Some of these pupils will have the opportunity to visit us and work with some of the TAs prior to the transfer day in July. I will let you know how these visits go in the next newsletter.
(Miss Smyth, SENCo)

EL SALVADOR

I would like to express a huge thank you to all of you for your incredible fund-raising efforts on behalf of the communities in Soyapango, El Salvador. The trip was a huge success with six football coaches, from as far afield as Finland, involved in both coach education of the adults and older children, as well as running fun football camps for the many keen younger children.

The aim of AVOCA (A Voice of Central America) is to work within three specific communities, using football as a vehicle to break down gang culture. Gangs and violence is a huge problem, not only in the three communities we work in but throughout El Salvador. AVOCA aims to bring communities together through both coaching and playing sport.

The children benefited from your generosity, receiving t-shirts and footballs. Coaching equipment was also purchased and left with the communities so they can continue to keep the children and young adults involved throughout the year.

(Mr Millie)



Children from the community of El Pepeto, Soyapango saying 'Thank You' to the children of St Gregory's

PRIMARY FRENCH LINK

In addition to the link with a secondary school in Le Havre, which is becoming established with year 8 pupils exchanging letters, we now have a proposed link with a primary school in Brittany: Ecole publique l'encre marine. It is hoped to exchange letters and projects.

SCIENCE FAYRE

Congratulations go to Cameron James, Reuben Eastwell, Brian Lewis and Alvin Minardi for winning the 2011 St Gregory's Science Fayre.



Many fantastic projects were submitted, giving the judges a hard task in choosing the winning team.

SCIENCE SPACE CAMP TRIP

The students involved in next week's Space Camp trip to Belgium have been working exceedingly hard to raise funds with a cake sale and 'guess the name of the skeleton' competition.



Thanks to Tukwar Gay and Shaquiel Gilbert, who came up with the great name of **RIGBY!**

CHAPLAINCY

In the next few weeks there will be a whole school Mass for the Feast Day of St Peter and St Paul on 29 June.

The Year 8 retreats to Buckden Towers will be at the end of June.

The Leavers' Mass will be on the last day of term, 22 July.

NEWS IN KEY STAGE 2

Explore Learning will be coming in to work with our Year 6s for some post SATS workshops - along the lines of 'Dragon's Den'!

Year 6 will be looking forward to a World War II day on Friday, 10 June, when they will be dressing up as evacuees. The day will consist of various activities, such as gas mask making, food rationing and a workshop run by Bedford Museum. The children will also be having a go at cooking some war time recipes.

Years 5 and 6 have an end of year trip to Wicksteed Park to look forward to on Thursday, 14 July. This is always an enjoyable day out for the children.

TERM DATES REMAINING

Half Term

Monday, 30 May – Friday, 3 June 2011

End of Summer Term

Friday, 22 July 2011

TERM DATES FOR 2011/2012

Autumn Term

Tuesday, 6 September – Friday, 16 December 2011

(Half Term 24 – 28 October 2011)

Spring Term

Wednesday, 4 January – Friday, 30 March 2012

(Half Term 13 – 17 February 2012)

Summer Term

Tuesday, 17 April – Friday, 20 July 2012)

(Half Term Monday, 4 – 8 June 2012)

Training Days

Monday, 5 September 2011

Monday, 31 October 2011

Tuesday, 3 January 2012

Monday, 16 April 2012

**WISHING YOU ALL AN ENJOYABLE
HALF TERM BREAK – PLEASE REMEMBER
CHILDREN ARE DUE BACK TO SCHOOL
ON MONDAY, 6 JUNE.**