



Look Up

ST MATTHIAS NEWSLETTER

Spring Term

April 2019

Message from the Headteacher

I like Easter. Mostly because it is such an odd time of year.

It's the celebration by Christians of the death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. This appears to be widely celebrated with the eating of chocolate eggs often distributed by a bunny rabbit – the Easter bunny. Why a non-egg laying animal not obviously well designed to carry numerous oval objects made of an edible and meltable substance made from coco became a symbol for Easter is beyond me. Why does the Easter bunny hide his chocolate eggs? He is a prankster, clearly!

Before going to headteacher school I was training to be a vicar. I studied the Bible and other religious things. One Easter nearly thirty years ago I spent two weeks in a monastery, fasting and in silence. Since talking and eating are two of my favourite things to do I found the experience a difficult one. After three days of minimal food and no talking I started to get over my feelings of loss and settled to some deeper thinking.

Most of my thoughts were not all that spiritual but mostly about what the world is like and what I wanted to be in it. I can't remember all of my silent and hungry ideas but I do remember one. My one big thought was about how important it was to know things. Knowing things can give us power and power correctly used can change things for the better.

This idea changed things for me. Instead of finishing my vicar training and learning why a bunny gives out chocolate eggs I decided to become a teacher. For me it was a good change. Everyday I see how knowing things is important, how education changes our children for the better.

As we approach this Easter our hopes are with the year 11 students studying hard for the difficult GCSE exams. We wish them every success and say a big thank you to the teachers who are getting them prepared.

I hope everyone else has a good break and enjoys some time talking, eating and thinking together.

I will be out looking for chocolate eggs dropped by a trickster fluffy bunny with no idea why? Wish me luck.



Name:

Form Group:

NEWS FROM ENGLISH

Macbeth

On 12th and 13th March, Years 10 and 11 were given the awe inspiring opportunity to watch Shakespeare's Macbeth at Wolverhampton Grand Theatre. After 400 years of performance, Macbeth has certainly not lost its power. From sinister plots to devious deeds, students were able to engage with the play as the characters came to life. Students, as a result, were able to develop their understanding of language, character and plot. All students were impeccably behaved - a credit to St. Matthias.

"My favourite part was the final battle. The added twist of ghosts surrounding Macbeth have added a new dimension to my own interpretations."

Georgina Year 11

It put not only Drama but English study into perspective. It certainly helped with my Drama monologue exam as I took my inspiration from Lady Macbeth."

Chloe Year 11

I think the characters did a good job of bringing Macbeth to life. It will definitely help with visualising all of our studies of Shakespeare from Year 9 until now. I liked the graphic use of the blood-stained hands. This was the most memorable moment in the play.

Tristan Year 11



World Book Day

Well done to our winners of the World Book Day Book Cover Competition. Firstly, congratulations to Chloe who won with her imaginative entry, "Curiosity Kills the Crow". Second place was awarded to Wiktoria for her novel, "Beyond the Darkness" and third place went to Filip for the sheer artistry of his astounding front cover. Each received book tokens and reading items and the winner was the lucky recipient of cinema tickets to celebrate. We look forward to reading these future classics in book shops soon! Mrs Gallagher.



¡Fiesta Hispánica!

On an extraordinarily sunny February morning I was lucky enough to take 11 wonderful Year 8 students to a Spanish festival at Aston University. The day was aimed at increasing motivation to study Spanish for students in Year 8 or Year 9 from across the region. Students worked in groups with other schools to find out about cultural icons from the Spanish speaking world: Ché Guevara, Frida Khalo and Gabriel Garcia Marquez. All the input from the university was given in Spanish and our students excelled with their confidence compared to the other schools. Following the input from the university, students then created an “Ofrenda” or offering for “Día de los Muertos” which they then presented to the other groups at the end of the day. Our students were outstanding ambassadors for our school.

Miss Bibby

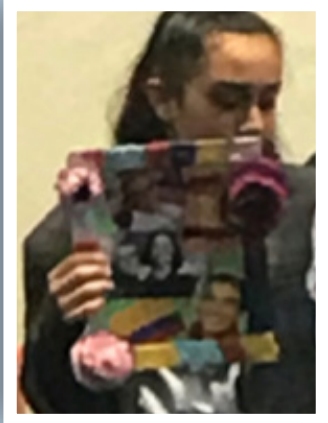


“I really enjoyed my time at Aston University as I learnt lots of new Spanish words and I met lots of new people. During my time there, I became more confident in speaking in front of lots of people as I had to speak in front of everyone. My favourite part of the trip was when me and my group created paper flowers.”

Ellie, Year 8 student

“In my opinion, the visit to Aston University was very interesting and fun. We learnt about different countries in South America; we mainly focused on Spain and Mexico and we learnt about the Day of Dead (Día de los Muertos). The visit was very fun and it inspired me to go to university when I’m older.”

Daniel, Year 8 student



SKILLS SHOW

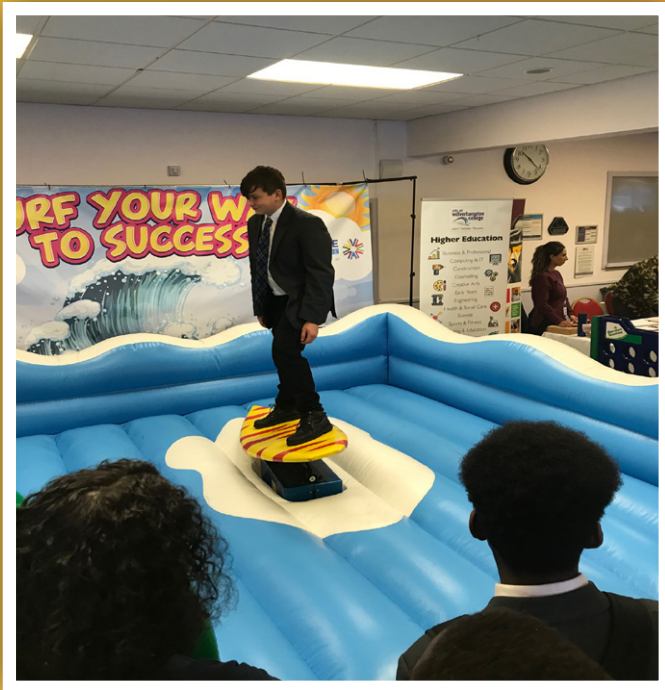
Year 8 students joined over 2000 young people from 24 schools across the region in attending the Wolverhampton College Skills and Apprenticeship Show.

Our students were able to explore different career options, inspiring them to find out more about the world of work and learn about college courses.

There were over 60 employers and careers / education providers at the event with students having the chance to try many new and exciting things. Students experienced

things such as going in a tram simulator, performing on a live music stage and going head-to-head with friends in football, basketball and fitness challenges.

Students also had the opportunity to take part in army games, get hands-on with hairdressing and cupcake decorating too. Finally, there were great opportunities in the world of computing with students designing computer games and getting to grips with ECG, ultrasound and retina scanners.



INDEPENDENT STUDY

We are changing what we are doing with homework. We want our students to develop their independence and how they remember important information. Homework will now be called 'Independent Study'.

So, what is the thinking behind this?

GCSE qualifications have changed and nearly all of the examinations taken at the end of Year 11 are 100% exam based. This means that there is very rarely any coursework that counts towards a final grade- it all comes down to the final exam. In order to be successful our students need to remember lots of different things from lots of different subjects. This requires a good long-term memory.

Research tells us that a very effective way of helping students remember more is something called 'retrieval practice.' Often when we think about learning, we usually focus on getting information into students' heads. What if, instead, we focus on getting information out of students' heads?

'Retrieval practice' means trying to remember material you have been taught rather than simply re-reading it and hoping for the best, which doesn't work!

So, what might this look like for our students and their independent study?

Students could do the following:

1. Make a list of all the information they need to know from each topic in a particular subject e.g. solutions to desertification on the fringes of a hot desert for geography.
2. Close their book or revision guide and make a quiz using flashcards or an app, such as Cram or Quizlet.
3. Try to recall (retrieve) everything they remember.
4. Go back and check what they remember against their answers.

We want 'Independent Study' to be about our students quizzing themselves about what they have learned. Recalling information from memory will help build and strengthen the long-term memory of our students. This will help massively with remembering all the things they need to be successful in tests and exams.

It is also important that these independent study tasks are manageable too. We are suggesting that the tasks be 20 minutes long. Research tells us that short sharp tasks that are done often and spaced out over a period of time are also effective in building long-term memory.

So, a day of 'Independent Study' tasks might look like this:

Time	Task
20 minutes	Write up notes on the Great Depression
5 minutes	REST
20 minutes	Brain Splat- poetry
5 minutes	REST
20 minutes	Make flashcards- maths
5 minutes	REST
20 minutes	Create questions on immune system

So, how will teachers know that these tasks are being completed?

Students will be quizzed in lessons to check their understanding and their memory.

You can help at home with this too:

- Practising retrieval practice at home can be as simple as asking children at some point after school about what they have learned that day.
- It's ok if you don't know much about the material they are describing- just let them do most of the talking! If you can encourage your child to describe and explain the information from memory, then you are helping them practice retrieval and reinforcement of what they've learned.
- You could also get your child to write about what they know on a blank piece of paper, help them make flashcards or help them make their own questions for retrieval practice. Just make sure that your child is actively bringing the information they have learned to memory.

Let me know if you have any questions or would like to know more about the idea behind 'retrieval practice' and 'Independent Study'. We believe it can make a big difference for the learning of our students.

Mr Paterson

NEWS FROM PHSE

The Importance of Social Action

JJ and Anisa from the National Citizenship Service (NCS) visited year 11 students to hold a workshop around the importance of social action. Our students were engaged in an interactive workshop that involved them identifying what mattered to them, debating issues in society that they felt passionate about improving and then creating a plan for social action that they would feel strong enough to campaign about.

The students felt very strongly about the issues of homelessness and youth facilities and were vocal about the things that they thought needed to change in order to bring about improvements. They worked well in teams to create plans of action based on a solid moral foundation. At the end of the session a number of students expressed interest in signing up for the NCS programme so that they could get even more involved in social action in the future. Very impressive!

Mrs Phillips



PCSO Visit

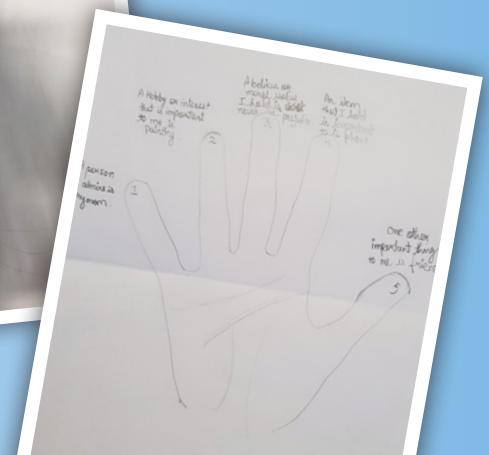
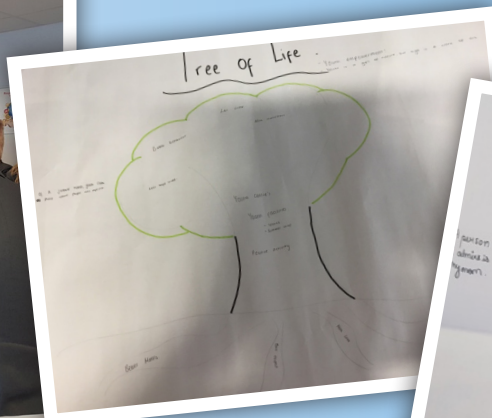
PSHE students across the school have been visited by our school PCSO as a part of their lessons. Students in Year 8 and 9 have been learning about a variety of issues that are helping to ensure they are safe inside and outside of school and online/social media. Year 8 have been learning the importance of online safety and Year 9 have been learning about the law in relation to drugs, cigarettes and alcohol. The PCSO has been discussing with our students the importance of making the right choices and the potential consequences for people that don't. Students have been asking excellent questions and sharing some interesting reflections on the sessions. Here are some final thoughts from students in Year 9 who learnt about the risks of drugs:

'I have learnt how people's health changes because of different drugs' Aaliyah

'It takes one tablet to kill a person' Krystina

'You can be arrested if you are caught with drugs' Massoud

'It is extremely dangerous for young people; I understand how drugs can destroy people's lives' Valenta



LEMON DRIZZLE TRAYBAKE

Preparation time:

less than 30 mins

Cooking time:

30 mins to 1 hour

Serves:

Makes 16 slices

Dietary:

Vegetarian

By Mary Berry

From Mary Berry's Absolute Favourites



Ingredients:

225g/8oz baking spread, straight from the fridge, or butter at room temperature, plus extra for greasing

225g/8oz caster sugar

275g/10oz self-raising flour

2tsp baking powder

4 free-range eggs

4tsb milk

2 lemons, zest only

1 heaped tbsp very finely chopped lemon verbena (optional)

For the glaze

175g/6oz granulated sugar

2 lemons, juice only

"I have been making lemon drizzle cake for as long as I can remember – since the 1960s at least! This is the recipe I am most asked for when stopped in the street, so here it is!"

Equipment and preparation:

For this recipe you will need a 30x23cm/12x9in tray bake or roasting tin.

Method:

1. Preheat the oven to 180C/160C Fan/Gas 4. Grease the tin with baking spread and line the base with baking paper.
2. Measure all the ingredients into a large bowl and beat for 2 minutes, or until well blended. Turn the mixture into the prepared tin and level the top.
3. Bake for 35–40 minutes until the cake has shrunk a little from the sides of the tin and springs back when lightly touched with a fingertip in the centre of the cake.
4. Meanwhile, make the glaze. Mix the granulated sugar with the lemon juice and stir to a runny consistency.
5. Leave the cake to cool for 5 minutes in the tin, then lining paper still attached, and place on wire rack set over a tray.
6. Brush the glaze all over the surface of the warm cake and leave to set. Remove the lining paper and cut into slices to serve.

Recipe Tips:

Tip 1: It is important to spoon the glaze on to the cake while it's still warm so the lemon juice soaks in properly.

Tip 2: Lemon balm works well as an alternative for lemon verbena if you can't get hold of any, or you could use finely chopped lemon thyme leaves.

Tip 3: This traybake can be stored in an airtight container for 3–4 days and frozen for up to a month.



UNIFORM GUIDELINES

1. SMART TAILORED BLACK TROUSERS

All trousers need to be full length and tailored. No jeans, canvas or legging type material allowed. No tight fitting/skinny trousers



2. PLAIN BLACK SKIRT

All Skirts **MUST** be below the knee length and worn with black tights only. No inappropriate or front splits, zips or decoration allowed.



3. WHITE SHIRT

(Tucked in at ALL times)



4. SCHOOL TIE - BOYS SCHOOL SCARF - GIRLS

Tie - £5.50 Scarf - £5.50



Remember

- skirts must be below the knee length
- no black boots
- no tight fitting trousers
- coats must be completely black

5. FOOTWEAR

Black leather type shoes - No large heels, boots, trainers/trainer type or canvas shoes

Examples that are ACCEPTABLE



Examples that are **NOT** ACCEPTABLE



School uniform must be worn with pride at all times. This includes wearing the correct footwear, blazer or coat to and from school. Students might not be allowed into school if not appropriately dressed, alternatively they will be isolated until the uniform is rectified. Please contact school if any of the guidance needs further clarification before making any purchases.

6. BLACK SOCKS

Socks worn under trousers need to be completely black.



7. BLAZER

£33.00



8. JUMPER / CARDIGAN

Black woollen V neck jumper or cardigan. Optional.



9. COATS

Coats must be plain black with no large logos. No hoodies or similar to be worn on school premises.

Examples that are **ACCEPTABLE**



Examples that are **NOT ACCEPTABLE**



Different colours/patterns are **NOT** acceptable.



10. CAPS

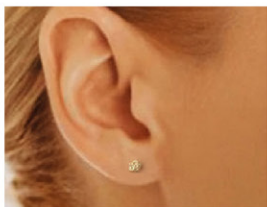
No caps to be worn on school premises.

11. HAIR

Only plain black hair accessories

12. JEWELLERY

Stud earrings only.
No facial piercings.



13. NAILS

Not Allowed



Allowed



NEWS FROM SCIENCE

As part of their lessons year 8 were exploring physical and chemical reaction through making healthy pancakes... I know - sounds great doesn't it!



Science Mock Exams

Year 10 mock exams:

20th June - Biology / 26th June - Chemistry / 27th June - Physics

The mock exams will cover all the units that students have studied since starting their GCSE Science in year 9.

YEAR 11 EASTER REVISION SESSIONS

	Monday 15 th April	Tuesday 16 th April	Wednesday 17 th April	Thursday 18 th April	Friday 19 th April
Week 1	Graphics 9am – 2pm (S21/S26) Food 10am – 2pm (S19) Maths 10am – 2pm (F13/F14/F20)	English TGA 10am – 2pm (F29) English ALO 10am – 2pm (F33) Maths 10am – 2pm (F13/F14/F20)	English TGA 10am – 2pm (F29) English RJO 10am – 2pm (F32) Maths 10am – 2pm (F13/F14/F20) Food (Cooking catch-up) 9am – 2pm (S19) Dance 2pm onwards (G54)	Geog 10am – 1pm (S35)	
	Monday 22 nd April	Tuesday 23 rd April	Wednesday 24 th April	Thursday 25 th April	Friday 26 th April
Week 2		MFL 10am – 1pm (F35) Geog 10am – 1pm (S35)	Food 10am – 2pm (S19/S21/S26) Drama 10am – 2pm (G34)	MFL 10am – 1pm (F35) Art 10am – 2pm (S34) Food 10am – 2pm (S19/S21/S26)	BTEC PE 10am – 2pm (G35)

WORLD BOOK DAY

Thursday 7th March

Staff and students celebrated our love of reading on World Book Day. Lots of activities across the day including: competitions, breakfast and books, cake sales and activities across the day that promoted all things reading. The day would not be complete without staff and students dressing up as their favourite characters from the world of books.



WORLD
BOOK
DAY
7 MARCH 2019



BIRMINGHAM LIBRARY VIST

As a reward for their commitment to reading, a group of students visited Birmingham Library. Students viewed the facilities and received a very informative talk from one of the librarians. Following this, staff and students paid a visit to Foyles Bookstore in Birmingham where they had a look at the books on offer and spent their World Book Day vouchers wisely.



YEAR 8 OPTIONS- TASTER SESSIONS

This time of year is very important for our year 8 students as they have to pick the option subjects that they want to study from year 9 to year 11. These choices can be vital for future career plans. To support this year 8 have been taking part in taster sessions for a variety of different subjects. The sessions provided our students with a real insight into the content of many different potential subject choices.

'It gave us experience for what we plan to do in the future'
Sheila

'It gave me an insight into what I could pick. I had a variety of different experiences.' Aaron

'It was so useful and it helped me with my decisions.' Rukiya

'I think it was useful because it could help me achieve my future dreams.' Javarni

'They were useful because you never know what you are getting. Having a taster session helped me understand the subjects better.' Millie



NEWS FROM FOOD TECHNOLOGY

Sausage Roll Bake Off!

Year 9 took part in The Saint Matthias Sausage Roll Bake Off! I know, just saying it is a mouthful let alone eating the sausage rolls!

QUICK QUESTION

How do you make a sausage roll?

ANSWER

Push it down a hill!

The dad jokes are always the best!



Cooking with Pheasants!

Meanwhile, year 10 foodies had an unforgettable experience cooking pheasant. Yes, you read that correctly pheasant. A massive thanks to Mrs Copcutt's daughter Louisa for helping out with these dishes. I'm sure you agree that they look lovely- they tasted beautiful too.



Easter Word Search

F L O W E R S G N I R P S Z O
S K C I H C T E B P A R A D E
Y T P B Z E T M P M G E H Y S
D G X P N A R J B S P A A E S
N E Z N R U A S U B T S P D A
A K O O A E D N N T D T P I R
C B C E B T I A N E A E Y Y G
X E G T B A T E Y K F R G L P
D G E N I L I B U S F T G I S
S C I E T O O Y V A O W E L U
S K C U D C N L I B D O M V N
U I Y K R O F L S P I L U T D
O H Y G V H T E V A L X J F A
K X R A W C F J A H U N T J Y
Y L I M A F A S P E E P S E M

Basket
Bonnet
Bunny
Candy
Chicks
Chocolate
Daffodil
Decorate
Ducks



Dye
Easter
Egg Hunt
Eggs
Family
Flowers
Grass
Happy
Jellybeans

Lily
Parade
Peeps
Rabbit
Spring
Sunday
Tradition
Tulips



MOBILE DEVICES UPDATE

The introduction of our new Mobile Devices guidance has been hugely successful. This is due to the way in which our students have responded and the excellent support from families. The impact in school has meant that there are fewer distractions in lessons and significantly less incidences of negative use of social media. This has meant we've been able to concentrate on supporting students in other ways.

The only incidences of negative social media have happened out of school and we continue to ask families to closely monitor how their children are choosing to communicate. Again, this can be a distraction in school but as it has happened out of school we are limited in how we can resolve these issues.

The new guidance has certainly prompted some very thought provoking conversations. It appears that everyone recognises the importance of regulating the use of devices with our children. Since the introduction of the new guidance it has been particularly topical in the media with advice and support being offered from various professional bodies.

For example, there are several clear steps for parents, which the chief medical officers say will help keep children safe and healthy. These include:

- Not using mobile devices at the dinner table – talking as a family is very important for development
- Keeping the screens out of the bedroom at bedtime
- Talking as a family about keeping safe online about cyber-bullying and what children should do if they are worried
- Not using phones when crossing a road or doing any other activity that requires a person's full attention
- Making sure children take a break from screens every two hours by getting up and being active
- Policing their use – parents should give their children proper attention and quality family time and never assume they are happy for pictures to be shared

Here is our new guidance if you aren't already aware of it:

New Guidance Spring Term 2019

The use of Mobile Phones and iPads in lessons

Students must not:

- Search any sites or topics other than those specified by staff
- Send any communications or post any material other than that specified by staff
- Film or take photographs without permission from staff
- Listen to music

The use of Mobile Phones and iPads around school

Students must not:

- Use their Mobile Phone or iPad at any other time apart from during lessons

This means Mobile Phones, iPads or headphones should **NOT** be seen or heard at any point during the school day apart from in lessons.

Consequences

The Mobile Device will be confiscated and will need to be collected by an adult.

School cannot accept any responsibility for any lost mobile devices. We will obviously help your child to try and find the device but we will not replace it. In PE, students are requested to hand their mobile devices in so that they can be locked away safely. Please advise your children to hand them in so that they are secure.



HEALTHY EATING

LOST PROPERTY

PROMOTING HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

All students are encouraged to eat a healthy balanced diet. Students are therefore not allowed to bring in items such as: large bars of chocolate, family sized packets of crisps, packets of biscuits or any sugar / energy drinks. Chewing gum is not allowed in school.

Parents can't deliver any 'fast food' type meals for their children e.g. fish and chips or McDonalds. This contradicts our healthy eating policy.



No chewing gum

Drinking in lessons

Clear, unflavoured mineral water can be drunk in lessons. This must be in a clear bottle. This is healthy and stops any learning time being wasted discussing what type of drink it is.



Chewing Gum

Our school is owned and managed by a private company. It is no longer owned by the local authority. One of the company's rules is that no chewing gum is allowed on site. Students have been informed of this and are reminded in form time and assemblies.

Please ensure that your child refrains from bringing chewing gum into school.



We keep lost property for up to a half term. If your child has lost an item please encourage them to come and look for it. Writing your child's name on items would help us ensure it is quickly returned. It's also worth considering the amount of money that is spent on school items. Having coats and trainers that are worth £150 upwards aren't necessarily appropriate for school.

AEROSOLS

Deodorants, sprays and perfumes in aerosol and pump containers are not allowed in school. They can act as triggers in susceptible individuals leading to a serious asthma attack, an eczema break-out or a severe migraine. Allergic reactions can be sufficiently serious to place an individual into anaphylactic shock.

The chemicals in aerosol sprays can also cause discomfort and irritation to eyes, nose, skin and upper respiratory tract and they may also impair breathing. The flammable properties of aerosol sprays provide a further risk to staff and student safety if such items are deliberately misused for pranks, causing harm to others and damaging school property.

IMPORTANT DATES

IMPORTANT DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

END OF TERM ARRANGEMENTS

Friday 12th April 2019

Finishing at 12.50

Lunch will be available

Non uniform £1 for charity

START OF TERM ARRANGEMENTS

Monday 29th April 2019

9am start

Full smart uniform