



"Start by doing what's necessary; then do what's possible; and suddenly you are doing the impossible."  
*St Francis of Assisi*



# The Academy of St Francis of Assisi

  
Happiness

  
Pride

  
Respect

  
Ambition

  
Peace & Reconciliation

Newsletter

Issue 1

February 2023

Dear parents/carers/students

It has been a very busy half term at the Academy. We have had Y11 and Y9 Parents Evenings, our students have appeared on Songs of Praise and Eurovision launch as well as taking part in a wide range of extra-curricular activities.

Please read all about our exciting news in our newly formatted newsletter. I'm sure you will agree with me that our pupils take part in many activities and do St Francis of Assisi proud with their positive involvement and achievements. I am very proud of all the students and staff.

The Academy will reopen as usual on Monday 20 February.

Best wishes

Ms Jo Leech

Headteacher



Eurovision is coming to Liverpool. Our students were involved in the launch night and were wonderful ambassadors for the Academy and the city. There are volunteering opportunities available – read more [here](#)



PRIDE

Bilal, Niota, Chenelle, Ms Duggan (CEO) and Ms Leech (Headteacher) were interviewed by Granada reports.



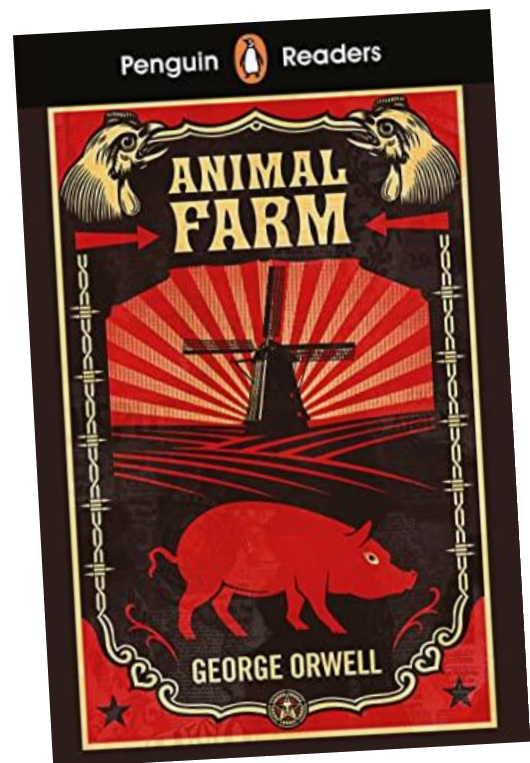
## Our English curriculum

Year 7 - 8 have been working on personalised learning pathways based on reading ages to strengthen and challenge their reading and comprehension skills. Our red readers have been busy revisiting phonics and other key literacy skills while our amber readers have been following our school Reading Development Plan, designed to target areas that will allow them to access the wider curriculum in English and other subjects. Advanced readers in the green groups, read a novel using a 'fast read' approach, meaning they read intensively and freely – led by their teacher – to maximise their understanding of characters, themes, and story-telling techniques common to all literary fiction. This in turn has driven up reading engagement and discussion around how and why writers do what they do setting them on the right path of enquiry into other literary forms.

Year 9 are part way through reading George Orwell's seminal work, *Animal Farm*, a story about power and its corrupting influences on leaders as seen in the Russian Revolution which the story is a response to. In addition, some students whose reading ages indicated they may be struggling with some aspects of reading, are receiving 1-2-1 intervention three times a week for 20 minutes, to help them with this. Attendance has been good and engagement positive which bodes well for

It's been all change in English since January!

when they tackle reading challenges independently.



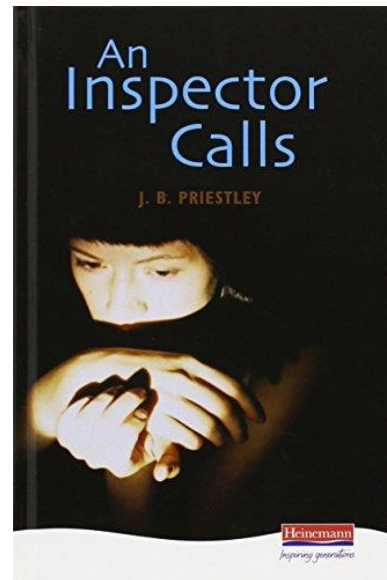
Outside of the curriculum, confident readers in Year 10 have been working with reluctant readers in Year 7 once a week during form time to try and build their confidence levels and rekindle their love of books. These 'Reading Revolutionaries' are doing just that, empowering less confident readers with the



skills and self-belief that they can – and should – pick up a book and read for pleasure having proved it with their Year 10 buddy. Again, the sessions have been well attended by both parties and early signs are the Year 7s are gelling well with Year 10 in pursuit of this shared goal.

Year 10 are finishing off work on Language Paper 1 which by design will furnish them with the skills to decode texts so vital to their study of Literature texts. After half term they will be moving onto study JB Priestley's 'An Inspector Calls'.

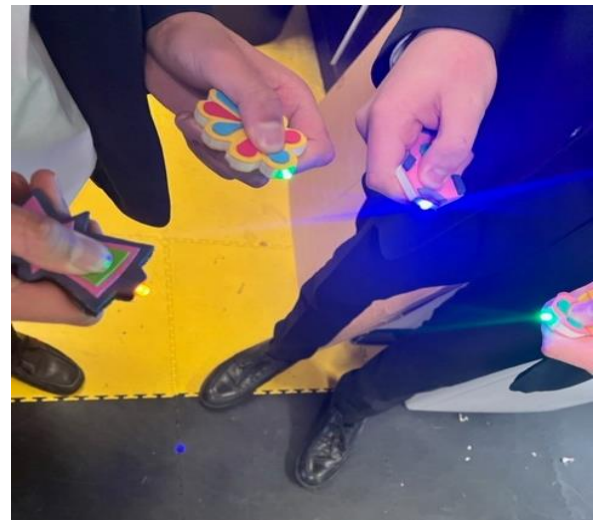
Year 11 have been working on examination skills for Paper 1 and revisiting Literature as they prepare for their mocks. They have completed their speeches which have been a wonderful privilege to bear witness to as a teacher given the diversity of topics and the sincerity in which many of them have gone about planning and delivering them in class. A big well done to them!



The English Department's renewed focus on reading – achieved through a combination of a rich and diverse curriculum offer and interventions that put reading for meaning front and centre of our mission – means we are confident our students will benefit from the positive impact of the school's Reading Plan takes effect.

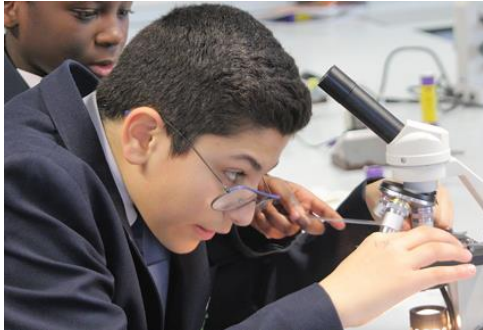
## Our Design and Technology curriculum

It has been a busy couple of weeks with year 8 designing and making LED torches with Mr Lavin. Miss Kelly's textiles classes have been practising their embroidery skills by making animal puppets. Mrs Graham's Year 11 have started their practical assessments showing off everything they have learnt over the past two years. They have made pasta, bread jams and a variety of other delicacies all from scratch!



## Our Science curriculum

Our scientists have been busy in the labs taking part in various experiments using microscopes.



## Our Computing curriculum

Year 7 have been working on their programming and coding skills during this term with Scratch programming. Pupils completed a series of tasks which developed their coding skills and then created a maze game which was controlled by the arrow keys on the keyboard. Some pupils even added levels into their game to make it harder to complete!



Year 8 have been working on a unit of work which explores photo manipulation. Pupils learnt to use a new piece of software called PhotoPea where they were able to use different images to create an advert to promote a Beatles exhibition. Pupils had to learn skills such as taking backgrounds off images, so they were able to layer them as well as learning new terminology such as rasterising images.



Year 9 have completed an Animation unit of work this term. They learnt skills in software such as Pixel Art Draw, Photo Pea and Wick Editor. Their final project was to create an animation for primary school children to promote healthy eating, using a recognisable character.



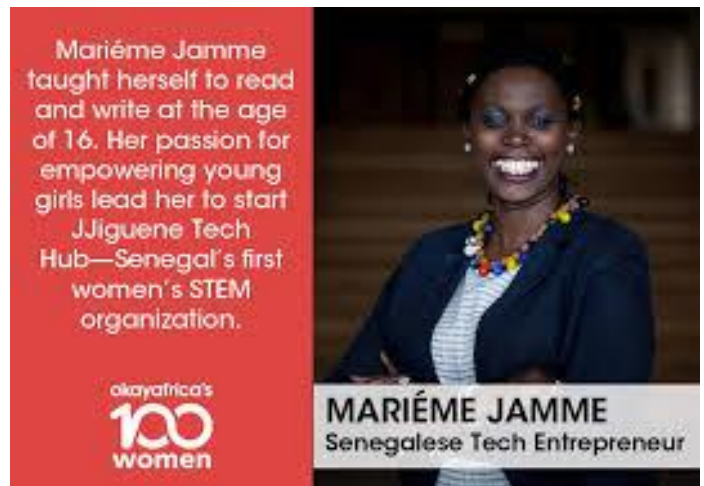


We are really excited about the Computer Science, ICT, iMedia and Business Studies trip to Disneyland Paris (25<sup>th</sup> Feb to 28<sup>th</sup> Feb). Our pupils will be attending a conference where Lady Marieme Jamme who is a familiar face to Assisi will be a guest speaker!

## Our Religious Education curriculum

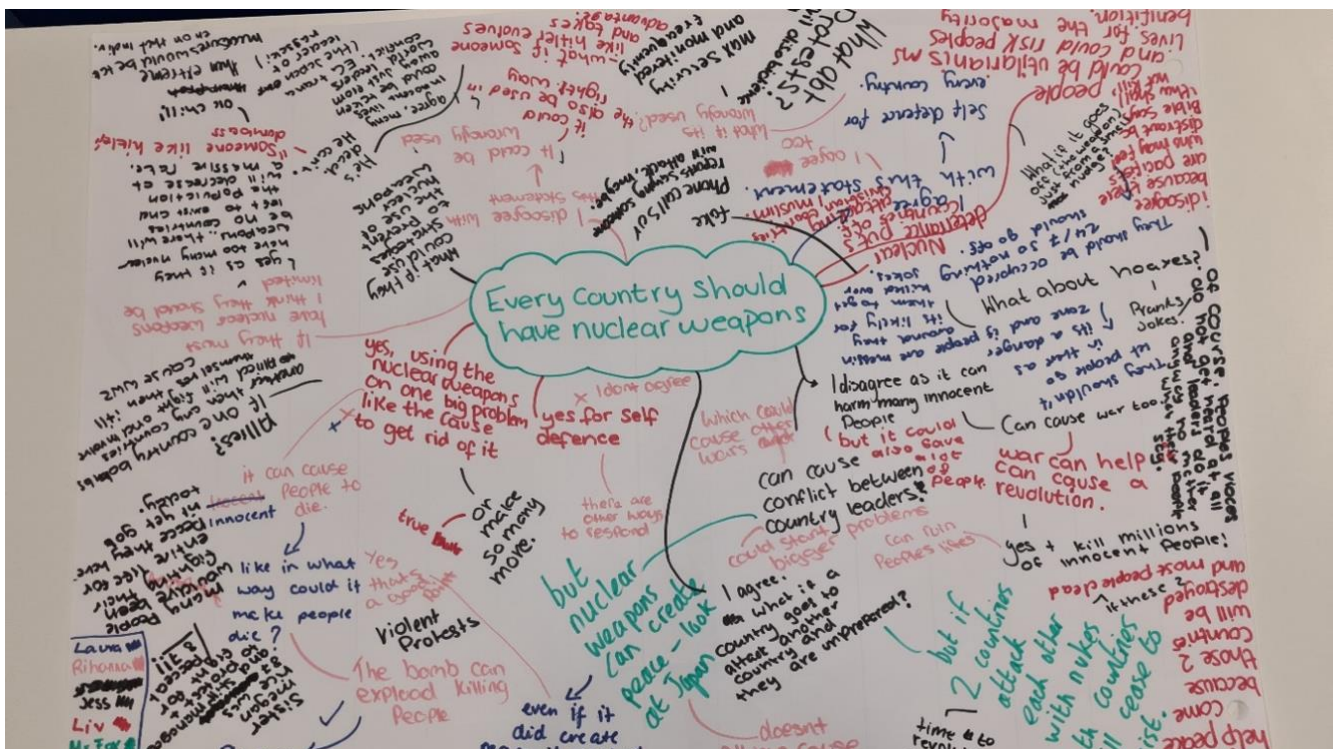
This term the RE department have been focussing on engaging students in effective evaluation. We have been addressing various issues using debating strategies and techniques. Mr Rice and Mr Fox have been implementing the use of 'Silent debates' in class. This sounds like a contradiction in terms however a silent debate has become a popular and enjoyable challenge for students who wish to express their views on topics such as nuclear war. There is one main rule to a silent debate, no verbal communication whatsoever.

Mr Rice's Year 7 group rose to this challenge during their silent debate titled 'should



humans use animals?' whilst Mr Fox's Year 9 group debated 'every country should have nuclear weapons'. Each student's opinion was represented by a different coloured pen with Mr Rice and Mr Fox also getting involved in different group's debates. Both silent debates were followed by an evaluation skills essay question in the next lesson.

Mr Rice and Mr Fox noted that the students excelled in their follow up evaluation questions and put this down to the quality of responses in our silent debates. Well done everyone.



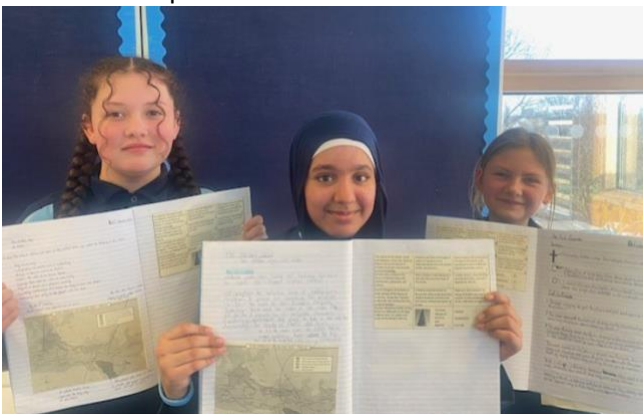
# RESPECT

## Our History curriculum

Our fantastic Year 7 historians have been studying the contributions of Muslim scholars and leaders as part of our enquiry into the Golden Age of Islam and the Ayyubid Caliphates interactions with early Medieval European powers.

Well done to budding historians Hadeel Daham and Sama Taher [7F] for their outstanding contributions to class discussion throughout this Topic.

Our Y7 students: Isabelle McKinnell, Hadeel Daham, Nia Thompson show off their fantastic books.



As part of our Holocaust memorial week commemorating the Liberation of Auschwitz Birkenau, Mrs Roscetti delivered assemblies to all year groups highlighting the immense struggles and incredible achievements of ordinary people living under Nazi oppression. Year 9 pupils will begin their enquiry study about the Holocaust in the next half term.



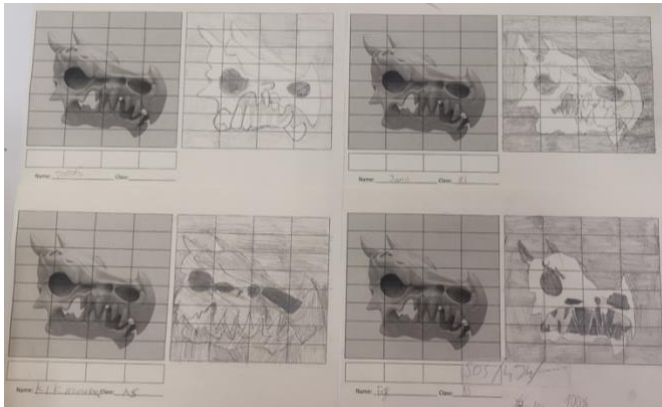
SUCCESS  
FOR ALL

## Our Art curriculum

Year 7 creatives are creating artist information pages, inspired by the work of Claire Coles. After half term we will be drawing on top and adding word showers to help with vocabulary recall.

Year 8 creatives are learning about the inspirations behind the designs of Gaudi's architecture and are eagerly working towards working in clay – the first since covid restrictions.

Huge compliments to Kiki for her focus, and Jamil for his clear skill.



There's a focus on literacy and oracy in year 9 creatives, looking at concentric circles and quad drawings inspired by the culture of Brazil and work of Beatrice Milhazes.

Year 10 creatives are celebrating mental health week with a little mindfulness through paper manipulation and quilling. These are



being made in preparation for mini underwater ecosystems.

Artists in Year 11 are 5 weeks into their exam. They are trying to balance researching their chosen themes with experimenting with media and ideas. There are booster sessions this week and a booster day on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> February to support them with their visions and intentions. Themes include layers, flight, reflection, in the news, aged and objects.

A small selection of Year 9, 10 and 11 art students will be working with LIPA graduate and production designer Laura Lomax in a light art exhibition workshop. This session will take place between 10.15am and 12.45pm on Saturday morning at LIPA on 25<sup>th</sup> February.

## Our Performing Arts curriculum

It's been an exciting term in the Drama Department with visitors from The Royal Court Youth Theatre, delivering workshops to Y8, 9, 10 & 11. Pupils have been invited to attend weekly free evening classes, which have had a positive response across KS3.

Year 10 enjoyed a trip to watch the National Theatre's Touring Production of Noughts and Crosses at the Liverpool Playhouse as part of their GCSE course.

This week we welcomed the Theatre company 20 Stories High into school to perform their production 'Loops' to the whole of Y9. It



was a challenging but hopeful and empowering story exploring institutional racism, microaggressions, encounters with the police, family relationships and physical abuse.



Some of our exam classes in Y10 and Y11 contributed to the promotion of the Eurovision song contest as it prepares to invite the exciting worldwide show to the UK, appearing on BBC Breakfast, radio Merseyside and Granada TV.

Our Year 11 were very excited to perform in the Now Festival 2023 on 8th February. They devised their own performance, exploring mental health and violence prevention.



The KS3 Drama club continue to prepare their performance piece as part of the School of Sanctuary contributions. The students are working on their own performance based on the message: **'welcome'**.



*Our extra-curricular activities*

**HAPPINESS**



## Our PE curriculum and extra-curricular news

### Year 8 student secure a place at the indoor athletics county finals!

Eight of our Year 8 boys competed in the Liverpool Schools Indoor Athletics against twelve other schools in a variety of running, jumping, and throwing events. The boys were outstanding and utilised their talents to win many of the events.

Some boys were even selected for Merseyside athletics due to their performance levels (Damian Idemundi - Speed Bounce and Sprint Winner; Mohammed Abogalayoun - Shot Putt and Vertical Jump Winner). Overall, the boys finished in the top 4 of the competition and qualified for the county finals where they will be a representative of Liverpool schools on the 28th of March.



### Year 11 Sport Science students learn to teach!

This half term our Year 11 sport science students have been enhancing their leadership experience by planning and teaching fitness sessions to groups of Year 7 students. The Year 11 students have absolutely loved the opportunity to teach and care for our younger students.



AMBITION

### ***Year 7 star netballers into the county finals!***

Our talented Year 7 netballers competed in the Liverpool Schools netball finals and came

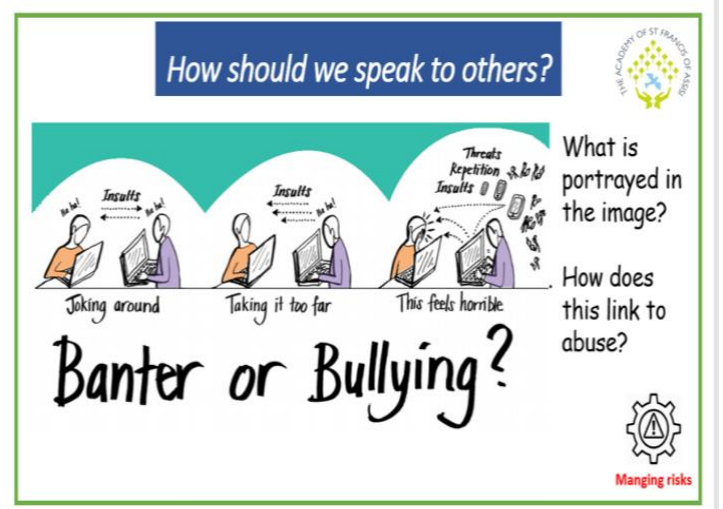
out on top winning five matches and securing a place at the county finals. They will now represent Liverpool against schools across Merseyside on the 30th of March.



### **Our PSHCE curriculum**

We have been focusing on how we should use respectful language when speaking to each other and the impact of using disrespectful language. This aligns with our Christian values such as respect and reconciliation. This topic has followed on from our year group assemblies and Curriculum for Life sessions in which students have examined homophobic language and how we must communicate respectfully with each other. In PSHCE lessons, students have analysed we should be considerate of others as well as the impact our words can have.

scenarios to encourage them to treat each other with dignity and respect. This has enabled pupils to display empathy and learn about how to demonstrate respect to each other.





Our students took part in Grave Talks with BBC's Songs of Praise. They were brilliant!

You can watch them from 10 minutes in using this [link](#).



## Our Special Educational Needs department

Our new SENSory Space on the first floor is a hive of activity and a haven for those who need it. From the beginning of the day to the end, we have students booked in to use our SENSory Circuit and our activity rooms to stimulate discussion or calm their minds. Dedicated Learning Support Assistants are on hand to demonstrate how equipment works and to devise sensory circuits for students to follow, to get the best out of our new equipment. Our students are loving their time spent in the space and are very supportive of each other whilst using the equipment.

To support students with their emotional welfare and finding ways to manage the demands of young adult life, we welcomed Miss Brooks to the team as our resident Emotion Coach. We also welcome Mr Stevens as an Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) to work alongside Mrs Dawn Defferd next term as part of the SAFE project. The ELSAs will be focusing on talking about emotions and the language of feelings so that our students can express themselves more clearly and overcome barriers to their learning.

## GCSE exams - January and February

Ms Diamond, our Exams Officer would like to congratulate those students who have sat their first external exams of 22-23 academic year. They have made a great start and hopefully will carry this momentum through to their summer exams. Students should look out for their statement of entries and summer exam timetable after the half term break.



## Maths and English tutoring

Mr Hepke has done a fantastic job of organising an extensive tutoring programme. Some of our students in Year 7 -10 are involved in a 15-week programme of tuition for Maths and English. They have an hour a week working in groups of three with a qualified tutor. The tutors work closely with our Maths and English teams to make sure they are supporting and stretching our students with the precise knowledge and skills they need to improve their progress.

There are currently 30 students in each of Years 7, 8, 9 and 10 completing their 15 weeks of English and 15 students in each of Year 7, 8,

9 and 10 completing their 15 weeks of Maths. The feedback from tutors and students has been extremely positive.

Some of our Year 11 students are involved in a 15 week after-school programme aimed at

boosting their grades in Maths and English. These sessions take place on a Friday after school for selected students working in small groups with their online tutor. Student engagement has been excellent.

We are running a full week of booster sessions for Year 11 over both the February half term and Easter holidays covering a whole range of subjects.



## Supporting our students' mental health

This term we launched the Wellbeing Award for schools, and sent questionnaires to parents, staff and pupils.

In February we combined children's mental health awareness week and assemblies about mental health and online safety. Ms Huthwaite worked with a group of students on the launch of 'The Assisi Way Podcast.' This explores mental health and positive wellbeing strategies.

You can listen to the podcast [here](#)



The Assisi  
Way

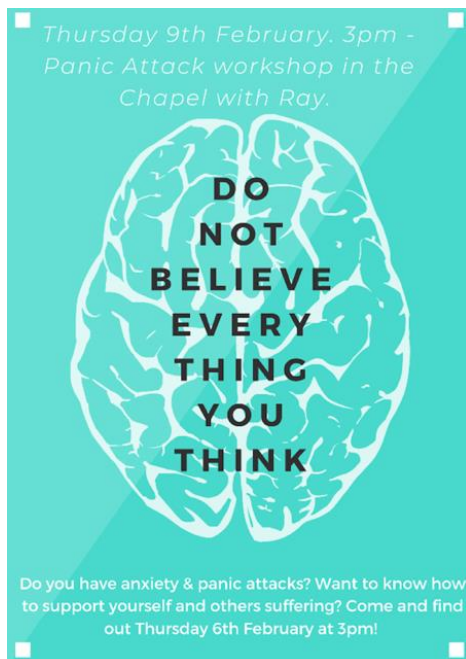


Our pupil mental health mentors were trained and launched to deliver 1:1 mentoring to our students. Some students have become our mental health ambassadors. They prepared assemblies and delivered to lower school during children's mental health awareness



week.

This week, our school counsellor, Ray, delivered a drop-in workshop on managing anxiety and panic attacks.



If you need any support, please contact school so that our Mental Health Intervention Team can work to find a suitable intervention.

We have just launched our first Safeguarding, Mental Health, and Wellbeing newsletter. Click here to access it.

## SAFEGUARDING, MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING NEWSLETTER



Issue 1  
February 2023

Dear Parents/Carers,

Welcome to our Safeguarding, Mental Health & Wellbeing newsletter. This half term we took part in Children's Mental Health Awareness Week, and we want to remind families in our community that we are here to support the emotional wellbeing and mental health of all our pupils.

We have a range of mental health support available for your child via our Mental Health Impact Team (MHIT), please see below for more details. Use the clickable links to access further information.

If you have any feedback about the newsletter, please let us know by emailing Ms Huthwaite: [huthwaitea@asfa.alsaintsmat.org](mailto:huthwaitea@asfa.alsaintsmat.org) and follow our socials for daily updates about life in the Academy: [Instagram](#) and [/twitter.com/ACADEMYSFA](https://twitter.com/ACADEMYSFA)

Thank you for your continued support,  
The Mental Health Impact Team

### Assisi's Mental Health Impact Team

Our Mental Health Impact Team (MHIT) is made up of qualified practitioners, including Mental Health First Aiders, ELSAs (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant), our Emotion Coach, Sarah Brooks and School Counsellor, Ray Loftus.

We all have experience of emotional wellbeing and mental health for mild to moderate needs in children and young people. We work directly within the school offering a range of interventions and will work with you and your child to determine the best course of action if they need some support.

This might include: 1:1 support and interventions, group work and sessions, peer mentors, supporting PHCSE lessons, assemblies on emotional wellbeing and training for teachers.

The MHIT team can also support children and young people to access other services in the city if they feel it would be more appropriate, such as YPAS, Kooth and CAMHS.

You can also access support through the Safeguarding Team at school.



Working together to safeguard our school community

WORKING TOGETHER TO SAFEGUARD  
OUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY

## Chess in the library

Mrs Wade, our wonderful librarian, reports that chess is becoming increasingly popular in the library amongst all year groups ... and the staff.



## Reading club

Mrs Gamble and Mrs Wade run a popular reading club on Mondays in form time where they pair up Year 7s with older students who speak the same language. This is to support the younger students to develop and maintain their first language reading skills, using books mostly in their first language, and giving new students an opportunity to pair up with a same-language speaker. It is wonderful to see how wonderfully kind our students are to each other.

We have also recently increased the stock of first language books in the library and have ordered some new books for the shelves, with input from students and staff.





## Debate Mate

Debate Mate is an extracurricular activity that has been running for the last 8 years in the Academy – with great success! Our most recent competition at St John Bosco Arts College consisted of the following debates: 'This house would make students take maths until they are 18' and 'This house believes the royal family does more harm than good!'

Our four debate teams, from Year 7-10 won a total of 7 out of 8 debates! A massive well done to the following students:

Razvan Argesanu  
 Alfie Francis  
 Toroabasi Etumana  
 John Akilu  
 Nathan Low  
 Samuel Oyekunle  
 Rukayat Bello  
 Nicholas Argesanu  
 Mark Argesanu  
 Rosine Mokwabily  
 Janna Abdullah  
 Pietro Amankwah

Talal Al-Masheheri  
 Elsie kinzambi  
 Thalia Dinn  
 Bianca Kamden  
 Rafaela Bandeira  
 Eva Kumah  
 Diaraye Diallo  
 Christ in me Idumwonyi  
 Jack Eaglestone  
 Yohannes Desta  
 Chance Mokelo

## Careers: Future of Work workshop and Focus Group

The students that participated were exemplary, they were willing to speak up and give their views and opinions on all the questions that were asked, and their feedback will provide valuable content for the Learning and Skills team and the BeMore website.



**A fairer, stronger, cleaner** Liverpool City Region  
 where **no one** is left behind.

## Modern Foreign Languages - Paris trip

Ms De-Sa-Braz organised for 40 of our students to visit Paris. They had a great time visiting Paris landmarks such as the Eiffel Tower and the Louvre. They spent a day having fun at Disneyland Paris.

Thanks to all the staff for giving up their time to make the trip happen.



Cultural  
capital



## Attendance Matters

At St Francis of Assisi, we place great emphasis on excellent attendance. To support your child in attending 100% of the time and reaching their full potential we request that whenever possible medical appointments are made outside of their school day, as losing time during the school day will impact upon their overall attendance figure and hinder their progress.

After half term there is a trip planned for all those students who have had no more than 2 days or less absence for this Term (Jan – March) as well as good punctuality and behaviour record.

#2daysorless

## How do you know how your child is doing in school?

Arbor for Parents gives you access to lots of information about your child's progress, attendance, and timetables. Once you have logged in you can also download an APP to get information straight to your phone.

Have you logged on to Arbor for Parents?



Scan the QR code  
and choose  
“forgot your password”  
to reset your password  
You'll then be able to log in  
and download the APP!



## Headteacher's Award winners (Half Term 3)

Well done to the very deserving winners of the Headteacher Award this term. All of them have been chosen for their dedication, ambition, pride and demonstrating the 'Assisi Way' to our school community.

### 13<sup>th</sup> January

Razvan Argesanu Y7  
Amelia Dicjkens Y7  
Khdye Ndow Bari Y8  
Joseph Saif Y8  
Adelina Popa Y9  
Dhanil Sejdini Y9  
Hastyr Mejeed Y10  
Maykal Georgiev Y10  
Olivia Roberts Y11  
Ammar Maqhat Y11

### 3<sup>rd</sup> February

Ryan Harkness Y7  
Rowan Edwards Y7  
James Pacheco Price Y8  
Zianni Ojiaku Y8  
Khdye Ndow Bari Y8  
Idris Baten Y9  
Heidi Mae Wallace Y10  
Stacy Hopsova Y10  
Dani Abdelaziz Y11  
Ayesher Ali Y11

### 10<sup>th</sup> February

Bailey Mitchell Y8  
Josh Sunter Y8  
Damian Idemundi Y8  
Mohammed Abo Ghalyoun Y8  
Joseph O'Brien Y8  
Inswaaf Mohamed Y8  
Damas Mokelo Y8  
James Pacheco Y8  
Olivia Piakowska Y7  
Nia Thompson Y7  
Amelia Dickens Y7  
Goodness Wilson Y7  
Kristen Uvwo Y7  
Isla Johnson Y7  
Isabelle McKinnell Y7  
Anna Spencer Y7





PRIDE  
AMBITION





“Start by doing what’s necessary; then do what’s possible;  
and suddenly you are doing the impossible.”

St Francis of Assisi

