



Year of Mercy: the Holy Door in Rome

We have frequently referred to the current Holy Year of Mercy which Pope Francis launched last December, and we have explained about the symbol of a door through which people pass. We have our own door in school and there are many others around the world.

Last Saturday morning the Catholic headteachers from our Diocese walked together on the official pilgrimage pathway along Via della Conciliazione and into St Peter's Basilica in Rome. We entered the basilica through the Holy Door which Pope Francis opened at the start of the year. This was a very special opportunity for us to pray together, and for our school communities. It was extremely hot with a temperature of 37°C being recorded, and huge crowds were present in St Peter's Square with pilgrims from all over the world gathering to witness and participate.

The previous day we had celebrated Mass at the tomb of St Peter and for this we were joined by a parish group from Wisbech. It was the Feast of St John the Baptist but we included prayers for the intentions of our students and staff, for our schools, and for our diocese.

The next event in this special year will be the Schools' Mass in our own cathedral in September.



Governors' Meeting

Our governors met last week for their termly meeting and I said I would report back on the discussion about academy status.

There was a long and valuable discussion about the issue, initially concerning whether or not the government still required all schools to become academies. While the messages in the media have been mixed and sometimes contradictory, governors felt that it is still the government's intention that all schools will become academies at some stage. There was a strong feeling that our school should only do this when we chose to and that it should be our decision. Therefore, although governors recognised that this might be necessary at some future stage there was no decision to actively pursue academy status now. Instead, governors asked that the headteachers of our group of schools – in Cambridge as well as Peterborough – continue to meet regularly and explore ways of closer cooperation and support.

I explained this to the other headteachers when we discussed the issue last Friday morning. As a result of that discussion we resolved to revisit our Mission Statements as a next step in planning our vision for our schools. We were in agreement that education is about far more than just exam results, even though they are a vital element. As that work unfolds over the next year I will keep parents informed via this weekly newsletter.

Sean Hayes

Duke of Edinburgh News

On 18 and 19 June, eleven Year 10 students went on their qualifying expedition for the Duke of Edinburgh award. They walked for two days and camped overnight, having practised beforehand and using the skills taught in their final expedition. It was a challenging weekend for all and we are proud to say we all passed! The experience was unforgettable and enabled us to discover our talents, broaden our life experiences and make memories along the way.

We (Lydell, Cheyenne, Tristan, Nassim, Niall, Clarence, Mohammed, Madeeha, Katie, Farah and Tamsillah) would like to thank all the staff who assisted and supported us throughout the whole experience! It's something that will stay with us for a long time and it could never be better.

Tamsillah Khan

Industrial Action

The National Union of Teachers has called for members to strike on Tuesday next, 5 July. This is likely to affect schools across the country, including our own. However, **we will be open as usual and students should attend as usual.** Planned activities, such as the Year 7 Geography Trip, will be going ahead. Induction Days for Year 7 on Wednesday and Year 12 on Thursday will not be affected.

Year 9 History Visit to Beth Shalom

Year 9 History students recently visited the National Memorial Centre, Beth Shalom as a part of their studies of the Holocaust. An intimate and peaceful memorial, our time at Beth Shalom was an emotional and thought-provoking day. We watched a documentary which focussed on the prejudice in 1930s Germany, the ghettos, the concentration camps and liberation. Much of the exhibition was artefacts and personal memoirs of survivors, recreations of key images and scenes, photographs and video footage. We also spent time reflecting in the large memorial garden of white roses. Each one was planted in memory of those murdered – some plaques were dedicated to individual family members and some were dedicated to groups such as the 1.5 million children murdered during the Holocaust. Each of our students took a stone and placed it on the memorial to those 1.5 million children as a commemorative act. We took time to reflect upon the inscriptions for each of the concentration camps, the remembrance pillar to Anne Frank and also the statue commemorating the efforts from Britain to rescue as many of those persecuted as possible. During the afternoon we had the privilege of listening to Steve Mendelsohn, a Kinder transport survivor who shared a testimony of his experiences and his message of tolerance of all. Although 90 years young, he had a humorous wit that had clearly given him the purpose to continue to give talks to the public ever since. It was a very moving experience and a privilege. *Mrs Quince*

Inclusion Drop-In : 5 July

There are a number of support groups in Peterborough for parents of children with Special Educational Needs. Useful websites for parents to find further information are:

www.pinpoint-cambs.org.uk

www.pfmind.org.uk

www.keep-your-head.com

www.autism.org.uk

www.familyvoice.org

www.scope.org.uk/support/families

www.cpft.nhs.uk/help/are-you-a-parent-or-carer

If any parents need help or advice, the final Inclusion drop in of the year, with Mrs Sennett and Miss Wilson will take place on Tuesday 5 July from 3.15 to 4.15.

Walk to Rio

The distances covered so far by each house are as follows:

Rochester: 184 000m

Beverley: 178 600m

Westminster: 111 800m

Cambridge: 107 800m



This is a total distance of 582km which is roughly the distance from Peterborough to Paris. We might have to speed up if we're going to get to Rio for the Olympics! *Mrs Fountain*

The Big Sing

Students will be taking part in this event with our other Catholic Schools next Thursday. We are grateful to Cambridgeshire Music Hub for sponsoring the event.



Wicksteed Park Visit

As part of the Humanities enrichment curriculum, Year 7 students have been offered a reward visit to Wicksteed Theme Park on Tuesday 19 July.

This is a reminder that to avoid any disappointment, the last day for return of permission slips and monies is next Wednesday, 6 July. *Dr Bottrill*

Sacred Heart School Fayre

Last Friday, 24 June, eight Year 9 students went to Sacred Heart Primary school to help run games and stalls at the Sacred Heart Summer Fayre. The Fayre started with our students leading a game together in the school hall which all the Sacred Heart pupils could play if they wished before each running a separate stall and game outside in the main Fayre.

The students represented our school brilliantly. Many thanks to Madeline Mason, Ali Akhbary, Eve Godia, Ines Monteiro, Tiago Jalo, Dario Balde, Angelo Maniraguha and Krystian Kwiecien. *Luke Turner*

Searching for the Saxons

On Thursday 24 June a group of Year 7 students went to the Cathedral. In the morning we did some activities inside the Cathedral finding out about Saxon life, and in the afternoon we did some Saxon archaeology. We used trowels to start off a test dig before sieving the old dirt looking for new finds and then washing the finds. A lady from the BBC interviewed Elizabeth, Olivia and me about our day. Our interview was on BBC Radio Cambridgeshire on Sunday 26 June. *Teilo Phillips*



If any students or parents want to find out more about our archaeological dig there is a Heritage Weekend at the Cathedral on 1 and 2 July. The dig site will be open to the public and there will be lots of activities going on around the Cathedral grounds.

Mock EU referendum

Last week we held our own mock referendum, asking students the same question that was asked of voters nationally. Our school's results were very different from the national picture:

Remain: 69.7%

Leave: 30.3%

It is essential that students understand how democracy works and mock elections are an excellent way of doing this. It is also important that students are able to debate topical issues in an informed and sensitive manner. The result of last week's referendum has created an air of uncertainty for many people. As a school we remain committed to providing an outstanding education for all our students and value the multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, multi-talented nature of our student cohort. *Miss Wilson*