



15 January 2021

Dear Parents/Carers, Students, Governors, Old Olavians

### Headteacher's Newsletter 95

Please tell your friends or family who are teachers that we are currently looking for a teacher of Mathematics. Further details can be found on the school website by following this [link](#).

Dr Sidhu wrote to you earlier this week to confirm changes to the remote timetable from Monday 18 January, but in summary:

- All Period 4 lessons will start at 11:30 am
- Lunch for all Year groups will start at 12:20 pm and end at 1:10 pm
- Period 7 for Years 7, 8 and 13 will move to Period 1 (8:40 am)

We hope this will allow siblings at home to lunch together at the more reasonable time of 12:20 pm and all students will be able to take advantage of the daylight at the end of the day to go outside and exercise. I think there may be some mixed feelings from students in Years 7, 8 and 13 about the earlier start! For staff, it will allow meetings and staff briefings to be co-ordinated more easily as all staff will be now following the same timings, and not beginning and ending the day at different times.

The latest news is the Government has confirmed that GCSEs and A and AS Level exams will not go ahead this summer. The details will need to be fine-tuned in consultation with Ofqual, the exam boards and teaching representatives, but the use of externally set tasks or papers, in order that teachers can draw on this resource to support their assessments of students, is being explored. Ofqual's response to the Government can be found by following this [link](#). I will continue to update you as more information emerges.

The Government continues to make it clear schools should remain open for vulnerable children and the children of critical workers. If you are classified as a critical worker and would like your child to be on site to access their remote learning, let us know as soon as possible via email to either Mrs Maxwell ([rmaxwe@saintolaves.net](mailto:rmaxwe@saintolaves.net)) or Mr Birtchnell ([mbirtchnell@saintolaves.net](mailto:mbirtchnell@saintolaves.net)) including details of your occupation and employer. Please contact us also if you feel your child is vulnerable and they would benefit from being on site. Please would you inform us if you son or daughter is not engaging with remote learning or you have difficulties with your Wi-Fi or accessing a laptop. We have contacted you to find out whether this is the case but please make us aware directly if you have missed the communication.

During the school closure, Form Tutors and the Pastoral Team will still be able to provide pastoral support to pupils and should be the first point of contact for non-subject specific concerns. Contact details can be found on the school website. Please be sure to include your son's full name and form group to ensure the message reaches the intended recipient. In addition to the pastoral support structures common to all year groups (of Form Tutor, Head of Year and Assistant Headteacher), the School has other avenues of pastoral support. The School's Chaplain, School Counsellor, and Safeguarding Team can offer additional support and advice for students facing a range of difficulties. We will continue to still make referrals to external agencies as deemed necessary.

Once again, our Year 13 Physicists produced record breaking results in Round 1 of the British Physics Olympiad, which they sat in November. St. Olaves students achieved an amazing 3 Golds, 2 Silver and 7 Bronze awards in a gruelling test of concentration, resilience, and knowledge way above the level of the A Level curriculum. In the words



of the organisers, "Every question requires a different perspective to get the measure of it. This fluency in recognising topics and linking ideas is, in part, what develops the physicist's confidence and mastery." This is the first time that the teachers can recall our students achieving 3 Gold awards. So special congratulations to Daksh Kaushik, Linus Luu and Joshua Selfridge for such an awesome performance. In fact, both Daksh and Linus achieved 'Top Golds' which places them in the top few percent of the 1600 (very able) students that sat the exam nationally. They will now progress to Round 2, giving them a chance to be the first students from St. Olave's to make the British Team, and hopefully they will be back in school in time to allow them this opportunity. Special mention should also go to Arunabh Bagchi and Priya Osborne for their achievement in gaining Silver awards. It should be mentioned that all the students who participated had already emerged from a tough selection process just to reach Round 1 so they all deserve to be congratulated.



The Music Department last week launched their first 'Virtual Concert' – a playlist of students' musical performances hosted on YouTube. The playlist is 16 minutes in length, comprising five short performances. The Music Department very much hopes that you will all have the chance to listen to and enjoy each of the students' offerings. They have worked hard to prepare these and would no doubt

be thrilled to receive acknowledgment of that. The first five students are Thomas Blew, Abhinav Nayak, Hans Loges, Liam Butterworth and Isabelle Soo, and their performances can be found by following this [link](#). Please note that instrumental and vocal lessons continue remotely on a similar basis to previously. It will therefore be necessary for some students occasionally to miss portions of live lessons to attend these. Please do encourage and support your child in this valuable endeavour in any ways you can. I hope we can all agree that the end results are very worthwhile.

A selection of the Year 12 Debating Team took part in the English Speaking Union's Mace competition on Wednesday evening via Zoom, opposing the motion: "This House Believes That government economic policy should prioritise the collective happiness and well-being of the population over economic growth." Taking part as a swing team they were excluded from progressing further in the competition, but they performed well, creating solid arguments about the difficulty of measuring and quantifying happiness as well as effectively using personal anecdotes to convince the audience. Feedback for all three of the competitors, Arjun Thakar, Zachariah Fischer and Wren Welfare, reflected the strength of their performance and the event served as an excellent practice for the rest of the Debating season. Good luck to the team going forwards!





The German Department is very happy to announce that Joseph Davies in Year 11 has entered the 'word of the future' competition run by the DAAD (Deutsche Akademische Austauschdienste). This required Joseph to invent a new German word that captures the 'Zeitgeist', or 'spirit of the times', define this new word, and provide a short dialogue where the word is used in a context. The winners of the competition will have their word published in a new, illustrated dictionary. We wish Joseph all the best with this competition and will share with you the results when we have them.

I would like to highlight further student achievements that have taken place recently:

- Congratulations to Ayomiposi Awoyemi in Year 12 who successfully completed the Advent of Code Challenge 2020 during his Christmas break. The 'Advent of Code' is an Advent calendar of programming puzzles which can be solved in any programming language which aim to collect a total of 50 stars by solving two puzzles per day.
- James Guest, Year 12, achieved a Distinction in his Grade 6 saxophone examination.
- Aarav Gupta, Year 9, achieved Grade 6 in his piano examination.
- Neal Ye, Year 7, achieved Grade 7 in his piano examination.
- Good luck to Year 9, Yiming Guo, who is planning to run 106 miles, 3 miles a day, before the end of lockdown to raise money for the National Health Service.
- Good luck to Year 12 students, Surya Senthilkumar and Luxan Sureshan, who are participating in the WOHA programme in order to promote free education for young children in India and Malawi. They are raising money to help children in a school in Chennai, South India.



Finally, congratulations to Old Olavian, Alistair O'Neil, 2006 - 2013, who formed part of the team which narrowly won ITV's 'The Chase' before Christmas. Alistair and the rest of his team answered questions, which put them 20 steps ahead of the Chaser, and won the Chase after a nery final.

Please see the Appendices below for this week's Careers news and information about reading from Mrs Martine, our librarian.

Wishing you and your families a restful weekend.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Rees  
Headteacher

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The [St. Olave's website](#) and Twitter page - [@saintolaves](#) has many more stories of student endeavour and success. Please do keep sending me news items and student successes either via colleagues or email. The email address is [publicityteam@saintolaves.net](mailto:publicityteam@saintolaves.net). Do not forget to include all the details along with a high-resolution photo you are willing to share and have published on the school website.

If you would like to donate into the Voluntary Fund to support the development of our school and enhance learning, and you are not already doing so, please follow this [link](#) to the Virgin Money Giving webpage.

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## Appendix 1

### Careers News



Speakers for Schools is continuing to run live broadcasts this year for young people whether they are learning remotely at home or in school. Their new series begins on Thursday 14 January at 5-6pm. CEO of Virgin Atlantic Airways, Shai Weiss, will share insights into his own career journey and discuss how he became CEO of Virgin Atlantic. Shai will focus on the importance of teamwork, resilience and maintaining mental clarity during difficult times. For more information and to join the talk please follow the link:

<https://www.speakersforschools.org/inspiration/vtalks/upcoming-vtalks/>

Students who are interested in studying for a degree at the same time as starting their career in finance or technology are invited to apply to **PWC's Flying Start** degree programmes. A variety of subjects and universities is available and applications close on 29 January. Full information can be found on their dedicated website at: <https://www.pwc.co.uk/careers/student-careers/school-careers/our-programmes/flying-start-degrees.html>

**Royal Holloway, University of London**, is running a programme of online webinars for Year 12 students this term covering the topics of study skills, UCAS, and guidance for using your time in Year 12. More information can be found on Moodle or by following this link: <https://royalholloway.ac.uk/studying-here/schools-and-colleges/year-12-webinars/>



## The London Institute of Banking & Finance

**The London Institute of Banking and Finance** runs a special programme of REACH events designed to give an insight into the world of banking and finance while highlighting some of the key diversity issues the industry faces. Their next event entitled 'Support Diversity in Banking & Finance for BAME students' will be held online on 12 February. Through REACH the organisation supports the progression of under-represented groups in the banking and finance industries. Students attending the event will be invited to join the conversation, meet REACH champions working in the industry, hear their stories and discuss how, by working together, change and diversity can be encouraged. Further information can be found by following this link: <https://www.libf.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/visit-us/reach>



## SPRINGPOD®

The careers and work experience platform Springpod is currently advertising a range of virtual work experience opportunities offered by leading employers including Vodafone, Nestlé, the NHS, Chartered Institute of Marketing and BT. Careers include law, technology, finance, marketing, journalism and digital innovation. The virtual work experience programmes and insight days are free and can be completed at times that suit both students and teachers. Participants receive a certificate straight from the employer at the end for use in CVs, personal statements and interviews. Each event features live interaction enabling students to ask any questions directly to the experts themselves and work/tasks will also be set and marked upon completion. All students in Year 10 and above have access to the Springpod platform via their school emails. <https://www.springpod.co.uk/virtual-work-experience-programmes/>

**Careers Guide 2020** is a highly informative and comprehensive booklet for students and parents from the Department of Work and Pensions. Many aspects of the skills needed when seeking post education careers and training are covered ranging from apprenticeships and traineeships to issues such as social media profiles on LinkedIn, writing a CV and interview preparation. Useful links connect readers to further information and guidance such as the National Careers Service. [https://www.bromleyebp.org.uk/uploads/asset\\_file/3\\_184\\_careers-guide-2020-revised-final-version.pdf](https://www.bromleyebp.org.uk/uploads/asset_file/3_184_careers-guide-2020-revised-final-version.pdf)

## Appendix 2

### School Library

It is important to keep reading in this difficult time when we are having to spend so much more time online, here are some of educational, emotional and psychological benefits of reading:

- 1. It helps you to discover things about yourself.** When you read a book, you often feel a connection to the storyline. This in turn, can not only engross you in the subject matter but also make you think about how you would react to those situations if they occurred in your life.
- 2. Improves your focus and concentration.** There is no question that the huge and mostly positive impact the internet has had on our lives. Unfortunately, this now means we spend more time surfing, watching videos, reading online and using devices. Reading helps to improve our powers of concentration and re-trains our focus and attention to the present.
- 3. It assists in improving your emotional health.** Books are full of emotions and can quite dramatically impact on how we feel. We may feel sadness, anger or joy at the unfolding treatment of the protagonist and become emotionally invested in the outcome of the story.
- 4. Improves memory and sharpens critical and thinking skills.** Our memories are vital when reading a book. We are required to remember characters, their features, plots, sub-plots, conversations and the sequence of events. This ability to retain information means you can become highly skilled at using your memory techniques in other areas of your life
- 5. It is a source of inspiration and motivation.** There may be periods in your life when you feel discouraged and may lose hope and direction. Inspirational or motivational reading matter can be a solid tool for challenging our way of thinking. We can gain valuable insight into our feelings and transform our lives positively.
- 6. It expands your knowledge.** Books add depth to your knowledge. With every book you read there is the potential to learn something new. Your increased insight can make you better and more equipped at making decisions of a higher quality and more improved life choices.
- 7. It broadens your Imagination and enhances creativity.** Books can transport the reader to different worlds beyond anything ever imagined. They give you a lot to think about which can fire up your own imagination and creativity through the development of new ideas, interests and perspectives.
- 8. It makes you empathic and humble.** Readers often connect to the characters within the book by learning about how their experiences made them feel. You become part of the book and understand their pain and grievances whilst developing empathy for their different lives or circumstances.
- 9. It reduces stress and can help you sleep better.** Reading is good for relaxation and losing yourself in a book can reduce your stress levels. Reading a calming book before bedtime can pacify your thoughts enabling you to sleep restfully.
- 10. It is a joyful and fun experience.** We generally enjoy reading especially if it is a book of our choosing and books bring a myriad of uninterrupted entertainment into our lives. Through reading we indulge in and participate in an activity that is enriching and pleasurable!