

5 February 2021

Dear Parents/Carers, Students, Governors, Old Olavians

Headteacher's Newsletter 98



After what may have been the longest January anyone can remember experiencing, we enter a new month, continuing to thank and applaud you for all you are doing to support your child with their education – to enable them to flourish, despite all the challenges and restrictions. There are constant glimmers of hope appearing – some on a massive national scale – the number of vaccines in one day is quite incredible – and

then some much simpler and more personal – I noticed it was slightly lighter as I drove into work this morning, which gave me a welcomed lift.

Since the recent lockdown, the school has been delivering online lessons for students of all ages, and I thought you might be interested to hear something about how we have been delivering remote teaching and learning, and how students are responding to it. Whilst the experience of the face-to-face classroom can never be replicated fully online, the teaching staff at St. Olave's are working incredibly hard to give an engaging, challenging and enriching experience to all students, and remain determined that their online lessons will enable them to progress as smoothly as possible through their planned curriculum. Many have proved highly innovative in developing their practice to take fullest advantage of the electronic platforms and media which we are now obliged to use more frequently – and the benefit of that experience will inform and enhance future teaching practices beyond the period of lockdown.

The student response to our remote learning programme has been overwhelmingly positive this term. Some direct student feedback includes, "just wanted to thank all the teachers for their hard work in keeping us engaged and making the lessons as entertaining and helpful as possible", "I can't wait to get back to school, but thanks so much to everyone trying to make remote learning as smooth and motivating as possible for us" and "I just want to say a huge thank you to all of my teachers for making it bearable and quite enjoyable." The final quotation given highlights the difficulties faced by students and staff during this period, but recognises the positive influence that good education can have on students' wellbeing during these hard weeks. I have met virtually with the Senior Prefect Team and Lead Delegates also this week and their comments were equally positive. If you did have any questions or comments about our remote teaching programme, please do let us know so we can address them.

May I remind you that we are currently seeking a part-time teacher of Art (maternity cover). Further details can be found on the school website by following this [link](#). Also, if any parent/carer is interested in leading on this year's 'Olavian', and has publishing editing experience, please do get in touch as this is an area I would like to develop.



We are delighted to be hosting our first International Women's Day Webinar on Monday 8 March. This event will be a chance for students and parents to come together and celebrate a range of work from Year 7 through to Year 13, including poetry, music, and art, created by students to reflect their understanding of gender equality. The evening will also feature talks from a range of external speakers, who have pursued gender equality and achieved success in their respective fields, including:

- British physicist, Dr Jessica Wade
- Head of Human Resources, Europe for Vanguard, Rebecca Bond
- Former School Captain, Shrishti Rentalala
- Network Sales Specialist at Pfizer, Chloe Ollis-Smith

I would like to thank Ms Smith for putting this event together with all the students and guest speakers. We look forward to celebrating this wonderful evening with you.

You will be aware from last week's newsletter that we have recently invested in a 'Wellbeing Hub', developed by child and adolescent mental health and wellbeing experts, Teen Tips. Their survey revealed that 88% of parents feel that school closures have had a

negative impact on their child's mental health. As we face at least another month with children home schooling, Alicia Drummond, the founder of Teen Tips, is delivering a Free Webinar on Parenting During Lockdown 3, exclusively for Hub members on Thursday 11 February, from 7:00 pm to 7:45 pm. Alicia will give tips and advice on how to cope and support young people, with a Q&A at the end. Registering for this event can be done by following this [link](#). (Webinar ID: 830 0030 2955, Webinar Passcode: 602979)



Did you know that Candlemas was earlier this week and that this marks the official end of the Christmas season in the church calendar? The Music Department felt that this fact, combined with the smattering of snow we recently had in the south-east (not to mention the blizzards in the north of the country), would provide the perfect excuse to hear Jingle Bells one more time!

Please enjoy playlist number 3 from the Music Department by following this [link](#), including not only Jingle Bells, but a lovely collection of performances from students across different year groups. The students performing are:

- Gautam Aruldoss, Year 12
- Amogh Bhat, Year 9
- Kamsiriochukwu Ikegwu, Year 7
- Eliyas Assefaw, Year 7
- Hanming Wang, Year 8
- Yiming Guo, Year 9

Every year in March, countries around the world celebrate Francophonie through cultural events honouring the French language. This year the Institut français and Francophonie UK will present the national final of the Joutes Oratoires Lycéennes, concluding months of French debating competitions, involving hundreds of Sixth Form students from across the UK. Year 12 and 13 students studying French



took part in a workshop organised by the Institut français, and this led to five brave Year 12 students going head to head with teams from some of the most prestigious schools in the country in the qualifying rounds of the Joutes Oratoires, a national French debating competition. The national competition takes place every year and this is the first time the

school has taken part. Our three teams acquitted themselves brilliantly, the more so for having had very little time to prepare arguments for and against these three motions:

- En période de crise sanitaire, les gouvernements doivent avoir toute latitude de restreindre les libertés individuelles. (In a pandemic, governments should be free to curtail civil liberties.)
- L'intelligence artificielle est une menace pour l'humanité. (Artificial intelligence is a threat to humanity.)
- La croissance verte est un leurre. (Green growth is a dangerous illusion.)

The team each debated entirely in French, against Sevenoaks School, Tiffin School, Hampton School, and The Grey Coat Hospital. Congratulations to Shruti Thatikonda and Viraj Seelam who beat the team from Eton under the eyes of an adjudicator from the Swiss Embassy. Griffin Keemer deserves a special mention for being a 'team' all on his own against standard teams of two students. Our fierce French debaters are hoping to sharpen their skills by running their own society at St. Olave's - we wish them all the best and invite anyone keen to try debating in a foreign language to join them.

Congratulations to the four Olavian teams, eight keen debaters, who competed in a recent debating competition against other schools. These rounds consisted of the following motions: 'This house would require all schools to be co-educational', 'This house would prohibit the private ownership of art deemed historically or culturally significant', 'Assuming technology exists this house would remove fear from soldiers' and finally 'This house would cap every company's highest salary at 10x the lowest salary within that company.' With ten schools, including Westminster and Dulwich, and 40 individual teams competing, we were excited to find out that our top two speakers (Scarlett O'Keefe and Shrey Choudhary) were placed joint 25th out of 80, and our top team, consisting of Jahnavi Singh and Scarlett O'Keefe placed 17th out of 40. The teams gained extremely valuable and insightful experience that will surely prove extremely useful in their next competition later this month. Thank you to their debate coach, Wren Welfare, for their dedication and commitment, and to Miss Benham for her help and guidance in organising our participation in this, and we wish them the best of luck in future competitions.



Team World Welfare is hosting an online quiz night tomorrow as part of the Wings of Hope project to raise money for school children in India and Malawi! To attend, all you have to do is make a donation of any amount via the [donations page](#) and then claim a ticket using the [Eventbrite link](#). This will add you to an emailing list and you will be sent the zoom link on the day. There are prizes for the winner!

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

- Congratulations to Year 13 student, Daksh Kaushik, who with excellent guidance and support from the Physics department, not only managed to secure an offer for a place to study Physics at Oxford University, but also achieved the sixth highest score in the Entrance Test.
- Writing a 400 to 500 words essay in a foreign language on 'Is internationalism important in the 21st Century?' was the title of the Lancaster University Modern Languages in Schools prize this year. Year 12 student, Shruti Thatikonda's insightful and extremely well researched essay in French was short-listed to be sent as only one essay per language per school, which could be submitted.
- 7B have been inspired by the new school website and produced their own webpage for St. Olave's, in order to consolidate their knowledge of French school life and related vocabulary. I am told their webpages are in close competition with our official website!
- Year 8 student, Kasim Rehman, passed his Grade 5 Music Theory with Distinction, and also his Grade 5 exam in Piano.
- 10K have been carrying out chemistry practicals on structure and bonding recently (supervised by their parents!) and investigated the melting and boiling points of various substances.
- 8B have been doing some great work, modelling the digestive system in a variety of different ways.
- Mathematics students in 8L created summary posters to show what they had learnt about Pythagoras' Theorem. The work went well beyond what would normally be expected at this stage and students clearly spent longer than the allotted 40 minutes!
- Congratulations to Year 13 student, Yasir Hafeez, who has completed an A-Z of wellbeing cards as part of his A-Level Art project in which he selected 'Mind' as a client. You can see some examples of his work below:



- Following on from Year 12 student Matthew Todorov's success in working on the Goethe Institut podcast series earlier this academic year, the German department is delighted to announce that Derin Burke in Year 12 has now been accepted onto the Podcast Team to produce the next series of podcasts over February half-term.
- Next Monday, the Natural Sciences society will digitally release its journal, in lieu of a physical publishing considering the severity of the ongoing pandemic. I hope you enjoy reading it.

Finally, please see the Appendices below for further Careers news from Mrs Platts, and information about reading from Mrs Martine, our librarian.

Wishing you and your families a restful weekend.

Yours sincerely



Andrew Rees
Headteacher

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. 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.

Appendix 1

Careers News

Aspiring medics and healthcare students may be interested in the forthcoming virtual work experience run by the company Medical Projects. They run a number of courses and their virtual ward round course *Ward Round Live* takes place all day on 15 February for students aged over 15. They have built a hospital ward to live-stream hospital patient cases directly to the course participants. The courses are popular but have fees. To find out more use the link: <https://educationprojects.co.uk/medical-projects/ward-round-live/>

How can university help students' career prospects? Answers to this question and others on the topic will be given at a live Q & A session with five universities on the evening of 18 February. The universities of Reading, Suffolk, St Mary's, Solent and Goldsmiths are participating. All enquiries to: outreach@reading.ac.uk

The University of Bath is holding a range of subject based free summer residential programmes. *Discover Bath* has the aim of widening participation and is intended for Year 12s who fulfil the criteria. Those taking part will experience a taste of university through activities including lectures, seminars and workshops as well as fun social activities. Applicants should be keen to put in a strong UCAS application and be interested in finding out more about the University of Bath. *Discover Bath* is available in 21 subject areas. Interested students can find out more and apply before the deadline of 12 February [here](#).



Speakers for Schools has a weekly programme of eminent speakers from many careers including industry, politics, the media and the professions. These engaging speakers discuss their career paths and their current roles and students can even complete a sheet to comment for their teachers. More information from: <https://www.speakersforschools.org/inspiration/vtalks/upcoming-vtalks/>

Financial consulting company, Deloitte, is holding a Spring Virtual Careers Festival this month with a variety of events for students from any year group and subject interest. The festival aims to help students explore opportunities through live, interactive events. Sessions include the virtual Deloitte escape room, true or false quizzes, skills workshops, apprentice Q & As, one to one sessions with Deloitte's student recruitment teams and presentations from their partners. To register for their events follow the link: <https://www2.deloitte.com/>

Creative careers are featured on the Discover Creative platform. Here students and parents can browse tiles leading them to further information about skills for specific careers and the professional bodies offering information. This lively platform is worthwhile for a browse <https://discovercreative.careers/>



Appendix 2

Library News



There are different ways of enjoying books. **Audiobooks** have become increasingly popular so why not try finding a book from the list below and then taking some time to hear the words of the story using one of these links:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/category/audiobooks>

<https://www.penguin.co.uk/audio/>

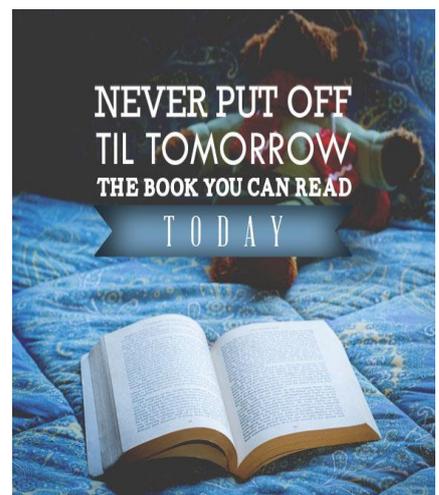
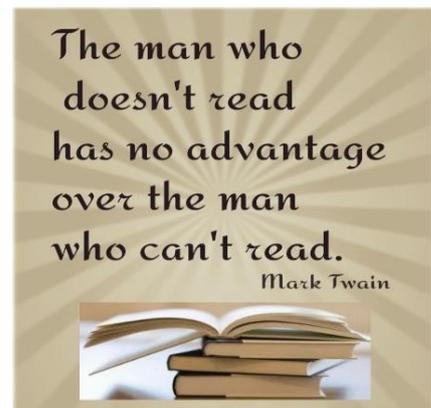
<https://www.audiobooks.co.uk/>

<https://www.youtube.com/user/GreatestAudioBooks>

<https://www.allyoucanbooks.com/>

The following is **Year 8 Recommended Reading List**:

1. Welcome to Nowhere by **Elizabeth Laird**
2. The Outsiders by **S.E.Hinton**
3. The Coral Island by **R.M.Ballantyne**
4. Coram Boy by **Jamila Gavin**
5. The Curious Incident of Dog in the Night-time by **Mark Haddon**
6. The Day of the Triffids by **John Wyndham**
7. Google Eyes by **Anne Fine**
8. The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy by **Douglas Adams**
9. Small Steps by **Louis Sachar**
10. The Hounds of the Baskerville by **Sir Arthur Conan Doyle**
11. How I Live Now by **Meg Rosoff**
12. I am David by **Anne Holm**
13. Joby by **Stan Barstow**
14. Journey to the River Sea by **Eva Ibbotson**
15. A Kestrel for a Knave by **Barry Hines**
16. Looking for JJ by **Anne Cassidy**
17. Lord of the Flies by **William Golding**
18. 1984 by **George Orwell**
19. Of Mice and Men by **John Steinbeck**
20. The Plague Dogs by **Richard Adams**
21. The Dam Busters by **Paul Brickhill**
22. The Giver by **Lois Lowry**
23. I'm the Kind of the Castle by **Susan Hill**
24. The Absolute Diary of a Part-time Indian by **Alexei Sherman**
25. Shadowmancer by **G.P.Taylor**
26. The Haunting by **Margaret Mahy**
27. Looking for Alaska by **John Green**
28. Ender's Game by **Orson Scott Card**
29. Monsters by **Michael Grant**
30. Booked by **Kwame Alexander**



Any questions or comments kindly email librarian@saintolaves.net. Thank you.