



Newsletter

October 2021

A word from the Principal

It has been a wonderful start to the term at BGN and it is so lovely to see our students playing sports and representing the school once again. Choir rehearsals are also up and running in the hall on Thursday afternoons, with our students sounding angelic.



We continue to enjoy the support from Father John and Father Ryan and, with their help we celebrated our whole school Mass at the beginning of term. We have also restarted our weekly form Masses.

All of these things are such an important part in helping our young people to recover, following the disruption they have had to their education over the past two years. School trips have also started again and I would like to thank all the staff who supported the Bronze and Silver Duke of Edinburgh students on their recent expeditions.

It has been a pleasure to welcome so many new staff to our BGN family this academic year. They are:

- Elliott Powell—PE
- Anthony Kenny—D&T
- Gill Peeling—MFL
- Jasmine Sheehan—MFL
- Jessica Butler—RE
- Holly Krober—RE
- Richelle Hall— SEN
- Rebecca Bisson—SEN
- Shanice Gordon—SEN

I would also like to say goodbye to Sarah Charles and Sharron Lillis who will be leaving us this term.

Although we have many less restrictions this term regarding Covid, unfortunately, as we all know, it has still not completely disappeared from schools but our students have been incredibly helpful and we have managed to maintain cases at a low level.

Thank you again to all the parents in our school community for your continued support.

Niamh Dolan
Principal

Don't forget:
Please remember to
send your child in
with a re-useable
face covering unless
they are exempt

Important diary dates

Wednesday 3 November
Sixth Form Open Evening

Monday 8 November
BGN Day—school finishes early at
12.30 pm

Thursday 11 November
Year 11 Parents' Evening

Thursday 18 November
Sixth Form Parents' Evening

Thursday 9 December
School Evening Christmas Concert

Tuesday 14 December
Evening Christmas Carol Service at St
John's Church

Wednesday 15 December
School Christmas Lunch and Christ-
mas Jumper Day

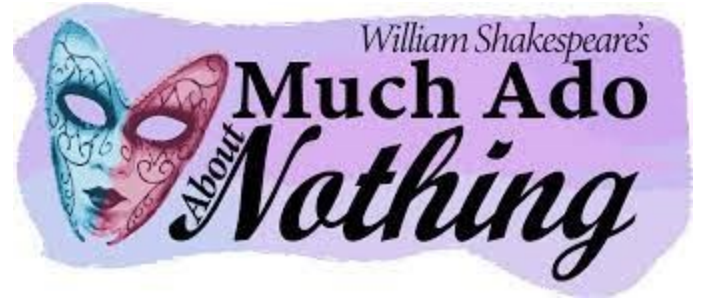
Friday 17 December
School finishes at 1 pm

Tuesday 4 January
School reopens at 8.40 am Week B

Expressive Arts Department

Much ado about Nothing – Shakespeare workshops!

We have invited students to take part in a short production of a Shakespeare classic – *Much Ado About Nothing*! So far, we have played fun Drama games and explored sections of the text! We will let you have details of a performance date in the future.



'Anything Goes'!

We are planning a production of *Anything Goes* by Cole Porter in July 2022. In order to really explore the musical and learn the very tricky choreographed routines, we have started rehearsals early! If you can't wait until the summer to see this incredible production then don't worry, we plan to showcase something at the Christmas concert!



Some quotes from our students:

"Can't wait to perform"

[Gracie Self—Form 7 Bakhita]

"It's fun"

[Caius Moggridge—Form 9 Bakhita]

"It's the first musical I've done in the school and I'm loving rehearsals"

[Matthew Chalmers—Form 9 Calcutta]



BGN Drama trips

We are off to The Globe to see *Romeo and Juliet* with the Drama and Theatre Studies A Level class. We are also planning to see *Six the Musical* this November!

[Mrs Furniss—Head of Drama]



Macmillan 'World's Biggest Coffee Morning'



Staff had their cake and ate it!

BGN staff took part in the Macmillan 'World's Biggest Coffee Morning' on Friday 24 September. Great cakes were baked and donated and excitement levels were at fever pitch when the raffle was held in the afternoon with the lucky first prize winners being the RE Department!

Thank you to everyone who supported this very worthwhile cause. A total of £142.92 was raised.

[Mrs Mawn—Assistant Headteacher]

We are all very excited that the long awaited expansion building work started on 30 September.

The first stage was to prepare the site for the new two storey teaching block by reducing the size of the Astro. The main work will start over half-term, with the project planned to continue for the next year. This will be a great improvement to the facilities at BGN and we are hoping to be able to furnish it to a high level specification for our pupils.

We may require some fund-raising effort to do this; if you have any ideas or have had any experience in this area, we would love to hear from you so please do contact the school office.

[Mrs Shurrock—Business Manager]

Update on BGN's expansion



BGN Building Fund



Please consider joining our Building Fund to help with our exciting expansion plans for the future.

Your contributions to the Building Fund will help enhance our new facilities for your child directly, during their time at BGN.

If you are interested or require any further information, please contact Mrs Donna Ayers at donnaayers@bgn.oxon.sch.uk.

**Please consider joining us
Thank you for your support**

'Proximity' Project

This October marked the first time the Diocese gathered together altar servers from all over our Diocesan parishes and schools. We were pleased to take three of our students from Banbury—Alfred Antony, Camilla and Sarah Nosal — to the stunning grounds of Oscott College for a day of reflection, prayer and discussion. The initiative was called 'Proximity' because of the way our altar servers are especially close to God in their role on the sanctuary.

Altar servers of all ages were present, from 'beginners' who are in their first year of service to one man who had been serving on the altar for 75 years! The day started with an inspiring talk by Father Mark Crisp who spoke about the life of Blessed Carlo Acutis, before blessing us with a relic of Blessed Carlo, on loan from the Basilica of St Francis of Assisi; there will be more on him in our Advent Services of Reconciliation. We then celebrated Mass together in the beautiful Chapel, accompanied by the seminarians of the Diocese.



Relic of Blessed Carlo Acutis



Esther, Stacey, Keryane and Tracey from Coventry

We had the opportunity to break out into discussion groups, forging new friendships with other young people from across the Diocese. We also met some super girls from Coventry who study at Bishop Ullathorne and Cardinal Wiseman Catholic Schools.

Following a tour of the College, we finished the day with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament in the Chapel. We were fortunate enough to be sitting in the choir stalls at the very front; it was a special opportunity for prayer, stillness, silence and peace.



Our altar servers: Alfred, Camilla and Sarah

The Diocese hopes to set up 'Proximity' as an annual event and, on the basis of our experience this year, I would happily recommend it to all our altar servers.

Alfred Anthony said of his visit: *"It was a fantastic opportunity that enabled me to realise modern problems with Catholicism and how others view my religion. The Mass and the adoration was celebrated beautifully, as it genuinely made me feel much closer to God in the Chapel. Overall, the whole experience was amazing and I would recommend it to anyone who wants to further explore their faith".*



Tour of Oscott Library

An amazing gift



Throughout the last year, pupils may have noticed some of our statues disappearing for a time before making a reappearance in a very much brighter, better, and more luminous state. This has been down to the skill of Mr Ken Storer, brother to our Lettings Co-ordinator, Mr Ray Storer.

Ken has progressively been restoring our beloved but rather tired looking statues, from Our Lady in the Chapel, to St Joseph in the Corrigan building, to the nativity figures and animals we use at Christmas. He has meticulously researched each piece, taking great care to recreate broken toes, fingers, ears and to revitalise the colours.

This summer he embarked upon his biggest project yet, when he undertook the restoration of our icon of Jesus, painted over 20 years ago by our gifted Art teacher, Jonathan Moss. Both Storer brothers began by bracing the back of the frame to make the icon stronger and then putting PVA glue on all the flaking and damaged parts of the fascia to stop any further deterioration and to give a base for the new paint. Once Ken started work on the painting itself, he realised how extensive the damage was. Over many years, the icon had been scratched and even drawn on, and there were large bumps and holes on the surface. It became clear that what was needed was more than just a touch-up here and there, rather a total makeover!



Both brothers sanded the old painting to reduce the lumps and bumps, completely white-washed the board and got rid of protruding nails. Then began Ken's work of re-searching the right image for the icon. Building on the previous painting, Ken selected the image of Christ from the awe

inspiring *Hagia Sophia Mosaic* in Istanbul. Using mostly acrylic paints, plus mixed media [pastels, gilding flakes and pencil], Ken created the stunning image we have today. To complete the work, he selected some words from scripture "*I am the way, the Truth and the Life*". Unbeknown to Ken, these words hold particular meaning for our school as they are the title of the programme we follow for our KS3 RE curriculum.

In total, Ken spent over 120 hours on the restoration of this much loved icon. The final piece is stunning and will be a powerful and valuable focus for our prayer and worship in school for many years to come. We are incredibly grateful to both Mr Storers for their time and expertise, but particularly to Ken for his creative vision, careful labour, attention to detail and tremendous talent which have come together to make such a unique and beautiful '*Doorway through to the sacred*'.



[Miss Smith—RE Department]

Are you looking for stocking filler ideas?

It's that time of year again. Panicking parents pulling their hair out about what to buy their children for Christmas. Well, let me help you out....

A new book is always a fantastic idea. Reading is beneficial for us in so many ways. In the English Department we are constantly explaining that reading helps improve vocabulary and spelling. It also gives students the chance to appreciate the structure of a book and to explore the use of various literary techniques.

But did you know that reading is also great for our mental health too?

Reading is pleasurable, can help reduce stress, provides 'escapism' from the real world and helps develop empathy for others. If you give your child a new book in their stocking, the gift will potentially last a lifetime, not just for Christmas Day.

To help you out with suggestions of fantastic, suitable books, I have given some links below to various websites which will, hopefully, guide you in the right direction. In addition, if your child logs onto the VLE, in the 'Learning Spaces' area there is a folder entitled 'BGN Reading Community'. This contains various resources, including a folder with personal recommendations for books from students who were in Year 7 and Year 8 during the last academic year.

BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS FOR Y7 AND Y8



Good luck with the Christmas shopping and 'Keep on reading'!

<https://schoolreadinglist.co.uk/reading-lists-for-ks3-pupils/suggested-reading-list-for-year-7-pupils-ks2-age-11-12/>

<https://schoolreadinglist.co.uk/reading-lists-for-ks3-pupils/suggested-reading-list-for-year-8-pupils-ks3-age-12-13/>

<https://schoolreadinglist.co.uk/reading-lists-for-ks3-pupils/suggested-reading-list-for-year-9-pupils-ks3-age-13-14/><https://schoolreadinglist.co.uk/reading-lists-for-ks4-school-pupils/suggested-reading-list-year-10-pupils-ks4-age-14-15/>

[Mrs Riley—English Department]

Go green for CAFOD: calling all you green-fingered BGNers!

It may not have hit your radar yet, but this November world leaders will meet in Glasgow to discuss the climate, how it is changing and what should be done about it. This meeting is called COP26. And it is a big deal! It has never been more urgent that humanity resolves together to protect the Earth and all its inhabitants.

For nearly three decades the UN has been bringing together almost every country on earth for global climate summits – called COPs – which stands for ‘Conference of the Parties’. In that time climate change has gone from being a fringe issue to a global priority. **This year will be the 26th annual summit – giving it the name COP26.**

To raise awareness of this with our pupils, BGN is supporting the **CAFOD Go Green Campaign**, which seeks to engage pupils with the issues surrounding climate change. All pupils will watch and listen to a series of films about the environment, read information about the forthcoming conference, and explore ways they can make a difference. This might be through fundraising to support those projects CAFOD runs which support poor communities most particularly affected by

climate change, or it might be through taking part in a variety of activities and discussions in class during the week beginning with our school feast day, BGN Day on Monday 8 November.

Every Department in the school has committed to raising awareness of the issues discussed at the COP during this week. We look forward to sharing some of our experiences of the week in the next newsletter!

One of the initiatives in the RE Department is to ‘Plant a Plant’. We would love to transform our ‘Holy Grass’ outside the Chapel into a space full of small trees, shrubs and flowers, recognising their fundamental importance to our planet.



Looking forward to COP26: Glasgow November 2021

Glasgow is the moment for countries to update their plans.

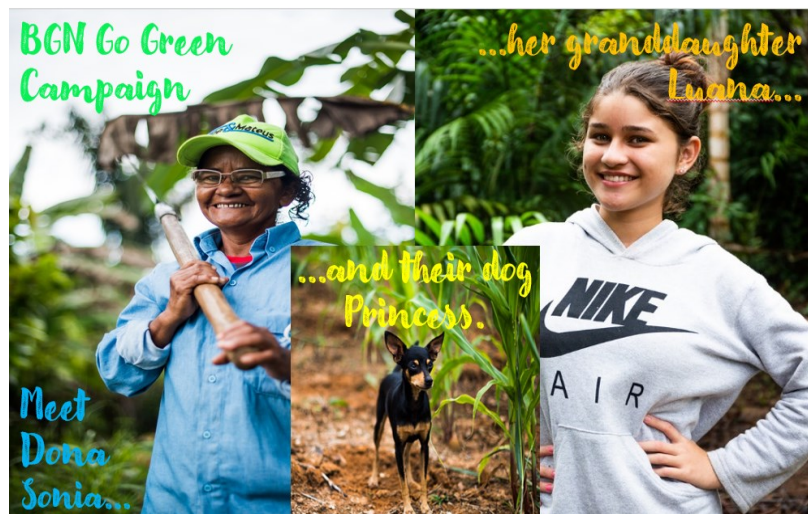
But that's not all. The commitments laid out in Paris did not come close to limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees; the decade out to 2030 will be crucial.

So as momentous as Paris was, countries must go much further than they did, even at that historic summit, in order to keep the hope of holding temperature rises to 1.5 alive.

COP26 needs to be decisive.



Go green for CAFOD [continued...]



One of the families featured in the CAFOD campaign is that of fifteen year old Luana, her grandmother Dona Sonia and their dog Princess. They live in the Amazon and work hard with their community to sustain the natural environment, planting new trees and plants which work in harmony with the rainforest.

If you were able to support this project with a plant or seed donation, we would be very grateful. We are asking pupils to bring in any donations after half-term, so from Monday 1 November. Every person who brings in a plant will get a ticket and then a raffle will be drawn to determine which pupils will help us plant our new garden on Thursday 11 November. The final deadline for plants to be brought in will be Wednesday 10 November.

Thank you for your support and let's look forward to a terrific week of events in November!

[Miss Smith—Head of RE]

"I want to see a very good future, a wonderful future, if we protect nature for my grandchildren and my great grandchildren."

Dona Sonia



What can we do?

RECYCLE
UPCYCLE
CONSUME LESS

THINK ABOUT:
THE FOOD WE EAT,
THE THINGS WE BUY
HOW WE TRAVEL



We hope that planting our small patch of bare grass will show our solidarity with Luana, be a lasting legacy of COP26, and grow into a beautiful and reflective space for years to come.



Health and wellbeing on the curriculum

All year groups have focused on Health and Wellbeing in their PSHE lessons this term. In tutor time sessions, each form group have tackled important questions surrounding issues related to coping with the demands of school life and finding the appropriate help and support within the BGN community. Students have also talked about how they can support and campaign for the health and wellbeing of our global neighbours. Below, I have listed the topics each year group have tackled to help you continue these vital conversations at home:

Year 7	How can I keep calm and organised in my new school?
Year 8	How do I keep safe in real life and online? This topic has a specific focus on Social Media and County Lines
Year 9	How can I help to stop child labour?
Year 10	What are the key characteristics of good emotional and mental health?
Year 11	How can I support my own emotional and mental health?



Meanwhile, in their dedicated PSHE lessons Year 7 and 8 have also been focussed on Health and Wellbeing. Year 7 began the term by looking at their own self image, gifts and talents. They then examined who was able to support them in school and at home during their transition from Primary to Secondary School. Afterwards Year 7 looked at what good emotional and mental wellbeing looks like, and discussed positive body image.

Year 8 began their PSHE lessons by looking forward to the year ahead and deciding on the personal achievements they would like to succeed in. Afterwards their PSHE discussion focussed on the impact of social media with regard to self-image and positive self-esteem.

This year, our Physical Education Department have taken on the teaching of Year 7 and Year 8 PSHE since the COVID pandemic. This has allowed our vital conversations surrounding physical, emotional and mental health to take place alongside the practical provision of exercise and advice on healthy eating and healthy lifestyles.

Ten Ten RSHE talks and workshops

Year 7 participated in an in-cinema education talk and follow-up workshop on Friday 1 October. Their session was entitled '*Facts of Life*' and followed the story of Esther.

Following the separation of her parents, Esther must make a new start. Moving to a new town, a new home and a new school, she struggles to fit in. Whilst her school friends refuse to accept her, and her Mum is absent most of the time, Esther finds solace in a growing friendship with her Grandad and develops a keener sense of her own faith.

'*Facts of Life*' is a story about friendship, new beginnings, bullying, aspiration, and the impact of social media on relationships. It helps young people to see their true, innate value through the eyes of God. After engaging in the film and joining in some discussion as a year group, Year 7 returned to their tutor groups for a follow-up workshop to discuss and reflect on self esteem and how we value our own self worth, treasure others, and nurture our faith and spiritual growth.

[Mrs Hunt—Head of RSHE]

Sport at BGN—it's good to be back!

Clubs and Fixtures are back with a vengeance!!

Since returning in September, there has been:-

- Boys and girls Rugby club and boys Rugby fixtures
- Girls Football club and girls and boys Football fixtures
- Boys and girls Netball club and girls Netball fixtures
- Cross Country club and competitions
- Rugby leadership
- Badminton club
- Basketball club



Monday 11 October 2021 marked a truly historic day for BGN as, for the first time ever, our girls took part in a Rugby training session. I am happy to be corrected by anyone who reads this article but, to my knowledge, this is the first time that BGN girls have ever played Rugby. Under the leadership of Banbury Rugby Club coach, Matt Goode, a tremendous session took part in the Sports Hall, overflowing with energy, movement and skill. This session is available to girls on Monday afternoons and the feedback from all involved was that it was a lot of fun. So, congratulations to all involved and watch this space to see how they all get on.

How to know what is on?

To ensure we fit in clubs and fixtures for all sports across the year, we often run clubs for a couple of months and then the sport changes. So if you see something you like the look of, make sure to get there fast as time is flying by already!



just click on 'Our school' at the top, scroll down to 'Sport' on the left-hand side, then click 'Extra- curricular Timetable' on the left.

Coming soon, in the next couple of months, there will be a Dance club and a Hockey club so, keep your eye out and come along to as much as possible. Clubs are open to all abilities, and we would like to see as many students there as possible being active and having fun! You can also follow us on Twitter to see regular updates on what is happening in PE at BGN!

If you are unsure what is on each week, you can check the extra-curricular timetable, which has all the clubs and fixtures' dates and times. It is published on the school website for the following week on the Thursday prior. As fixtures are different each week, clubs can sometimes change. Lunchtime clubs are also different from a week A to a week B, so always make sure you check the website. To find it on the website,



[Miss Gines—Head of PE]



'Three Peaks Challenge'

Just before the summer holidays we announced that BGN staff were going to attempt the 'Three Peaks Challenge' to raise money for The Brodey Cancer Centre at the Horton Hospital and Katharine House Hospice.

Well... we did it!! We climbed Ben Nevis, Scafell Pike and Snowdon in 23 hours and 35 minutes. Please have a look at our journey below.

And we're off, bright and early all ready and raring to go! #bennevis #3peaks #challenge



Our aim was to raise £500 and we are currently on £1,910! Even though we have 'smashed' the original target, it would be amazing to cross the £2,000 line and give £1,000 to both of these truly deserving charities. If you are able to donate please go to the 'JustGiving' page below. We will be sending the money to these two amazing charities on 12 November 2021.

[The Three Peaks' Team consisted of Miss Gines, Mr Woodham, Mr Cross, Mr Savania, Mr Thornton and Miss Williams]

One from the top, not a great view as it was pretty foggy, but we made it!!! 🏔️ #BenNevis #3peaks #onedowntwotogo



For those potentially following us through the night, we are on our way to Snowdon, aiming to reach there by around 1-1.30 am. Legs are tired, bodies are tired, but spirits are still high. Long drive to go so hopefully we'll get some shut eye on the way!



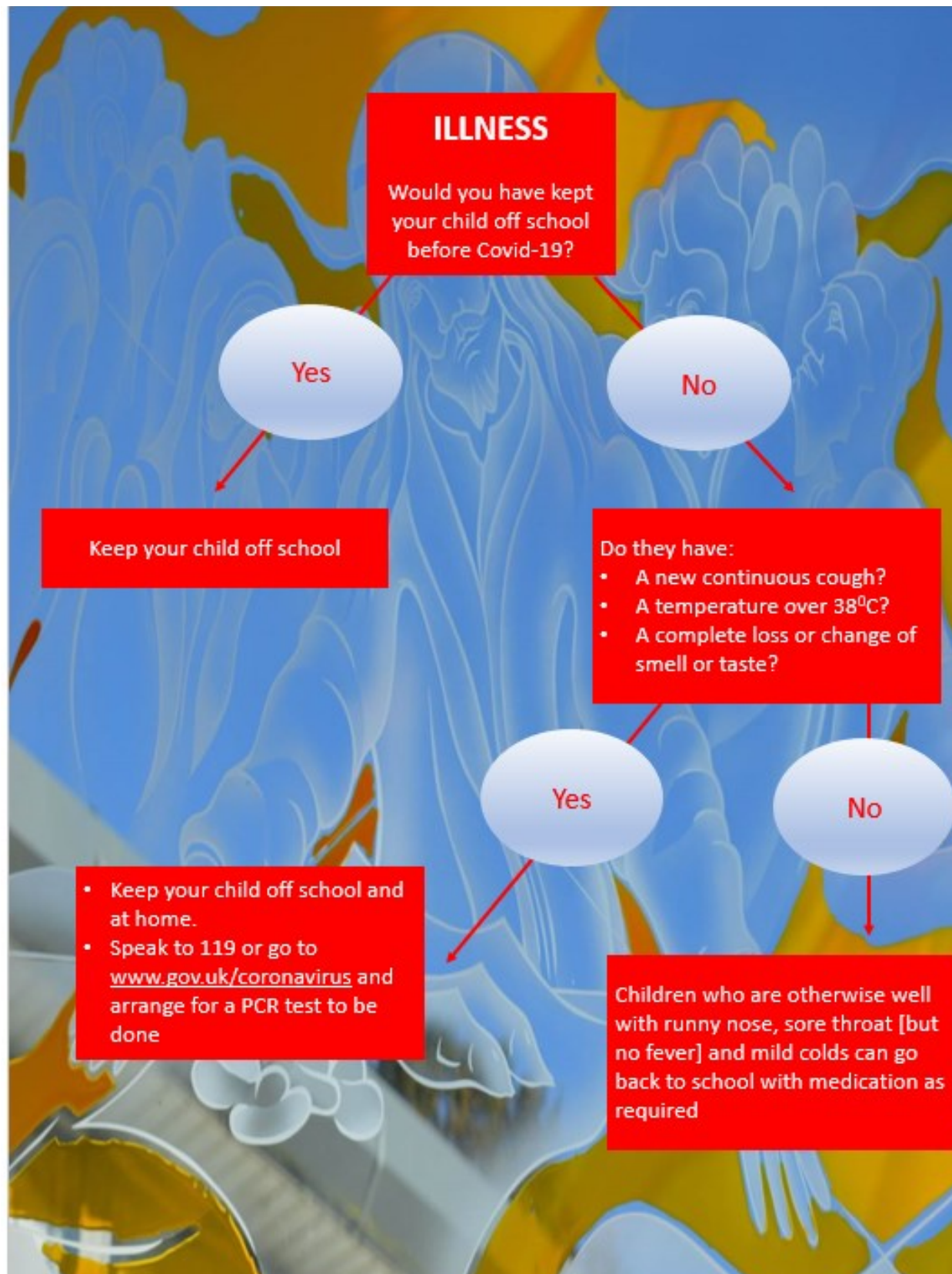
Through torrential rain and 30 mph winds, we managed to summit Snowdon at around 3.45 am! Having dealt with falling knees, sore calfs, burning thighs, 1 or 2 blisters, and an illiotial band giving up, we finished our challenge at 5.48 am with a completion time of 23 hours and 35 minutes. Thank you to everyone that supported us either through donations, well wishes, or messages, and those that followed the challenge with us, we are extremely grateful to you all. If you havent donated and still wanted to, there is still time. Thank you again!



JustGiving Crowd-funding Page:

[https://
www.justgiving.com/
crowdfunding/bgn-3-
peaks-challenge?](https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/bgn-3-peaks-challenge?)

Attendance DOES matter



Tag Rugby Leaders

After a nineteen-month absence, BGN welcomed primary school children back to take part in sporting competitions. Bishop Loveday, Harriers, St Joseph's, The Grange and William Morris brought their Year 5/6 Tag Rugby teams on Thursday 14 October.



Upon arrival, our BGN Student Leaders took each team for a warm-up, an explanation of the rules, and a practice match. During the competition our Stu-

dent Leaders refereed games, gave guidance and encouragement to the participants. The festival was played in a positive atmosphere throughout, and the School Games value of 'Respect' was on display in all teams from encouraging team mates, congratulating the opposition in a tunnel at the end of the game, and applauding good play.



Year 10 Student Leaders

Kesten Kuhrau, Jack Murphy, Daniel Thornley and Bailey Blackburn

Year 9 Student Leaders

Darragh Guinan, Callum McFarlane, James Conlon and Noah Pickering

Year 8 Student Leader

Rhys Greatbatch

[Mr Mawn —School Sport Co-ordinator]

Primary schools commented as follows

"The children worked really well as a team, supporting and encouraging each other throughout the competition. The Student Leaders were really helpful."

[St Joseph's]



"The Young Leaders knew the rules and managed the games well."

[The Grange]

"Brilliant referees; great explanation of reasons for decisions and the Leaders helped the teams during the game."

[Bishop Loveday]

Be in it, to win it!



BGN 200 Club



Why not join our 200 Club? For just **£5** a month you have the opportunity of winning **£100** every month whilst donating to a very worthy cause – your child's school.

We currently have spare numbers available, so if you are interested or want any more information, please contact Mrs Donna Ayers, our 200 Club Administrator at donnaayers@bgn.oxon.sch.uk.

congratulations!

July's winning number is **47**

August's winning number is **185**

September's winning number is **9**