



Newsletter Christmas 2021

A word from the Headteacher

I hope by the time you read this you will be enjoying your Christmas break and some much needed time with friends and family.

We have worked hard at BGN to include all our usual end of term celebrations, albeit with adjustments due to the current situation. Our reconciliation service is always a highlight of this term and our thanks go to the RE Department for providing such a wonderful experience. We were delighted that family, friends and members of St John's Parish were able to join us online for our annual Carol Service. My thanks go to our Pupil Leadership Team who have led our Advent Assemblies during December. The PLT have also been busy filming the end of term Christmas Talent Show which is always very popular with students and staff. Filming of the Christmas Concert was a great success and I look forward to watching this. Well done to all our staff and students who have worked so hard to prepare for all our Christmas activities in difficult circumstances.

This academic year has been especially challenging for all schools and I am absolutely delighted that we were able to remain fully open to all year groups. Thank you to all our wonderful staff, students and parents for your ongoing support.

This term we welcome Madeleine Terry to the D&T Department, and also Rebecca Russell, who will be our LRC Manager and KS5 Administrator. We say goodbye to Mr Bains who leaves us to take up another position closer to his home. He will be greatly missed by staff and students alike.

With my best wishes for a peaceful and relaxing Christmas and New Year.

Niamh Dolan
Headteacher



Important diary dates

Friday 17 December

School closes at 1 pm for the Christmas holidays

Tuesday 4 January

School reopens for testing Week B
See opposite for which year groups are in school

Friday 14 January

INSET day—school closed to all pupils

Thursday 27 January

Year 9 Options Event

Thursday 17 February

Year 9 Parents' Evening

Monday 21 February to

Friday 25 February

Half-term holiday

Monday 28 February

School re-opens at 8.40 am Week A

Return to school for pupils in January 2022

Tuesday 4 January	Sixth Form [am] and Year 7 [pm] testing Year 13 remain in school
Wednesday 5 January	Year 8 [am] and Year 11 [pm] testing Year 7 and Sixth Form in school
Thursday 6 January	Year 9 [am] and Year 10 [pm] testing Years 7, 8, 11 and Sixth Form in school
Friday 7 January	School open to all pupils



London calling... after lockdown

Romeo and Juliet

In October, BGN saw the return of school trips out to the wider world with the Sixth Form visit to see a performance of *'Romeo and Juliet'* by the Royal Shakespeare Company at the world famous Globe Theatre. Today's Globe is a faithful reconstruction of the original Elizabethan playhouse for which William Shakespeare wrote his plays. It is open to the elements so we were all pleased and relieved when the forecast for the day was mild and sunny.

Having caught the train down to Marylebone, we took the tube across London to Camden, picking up a quick bite to eat from Camden Market, and then taking advantage of the good weather to walk the rest of the way, past Trafalgar Square and Nelson's Column, down Whitehall, pausing at the Cenotaph and Downing Street, before finishing with a hasty walk along the Thames to the theatre.

The trip was an important part of the students' course as it complimented their study of Elizabethan theatre and the performance conditions of the day. The play also linked to the Year 13 study of *'Theatre in Education'* as it focused on the mental health of young people.

It was liberating to be out and about in the vibrant hustle and bustle of London, but the real highlight of the day was the wonderful performance at the Globe, featuring a diverse and youthful cast. It was an invaluable opportunity to experience live performance again, as well as benefitting the students' A Level knowledge.

[Mrs Furniss—Head of Drama]



New beginnings as the foundations are laid...



The Science Department bids a fond farewell to its hut

Over the October half-term, the school said goodbye to one of its temporary huts to make way for the new teaching block. The digger made light work of reducing the classroom to rubble, taking only two days and a few skips to remove it from site.

The foundations were then prepared and concrete poured in, ready for the steelworks.

Work has also now begun on the new hall.

[Mr Buzzard
Operations Manager]



Christmas Mass times in our parishes

Parish of St John the Evangelist, Banbury

Friday 24 December

Mass at 6 pm

Carols at 11.30 pm followed by Midnight Mass

Saturday 25 December

Mass at 8.45 am

Mass at 11.15 am

Parish of St Joseph the Worker, Banbury

Saturday 25 December

Mass at 10 am

St Thomas of Canterbury, Wroxton

Saturday 25 December

Mass at 8.30 am

Parish of the Immaculate Conception, Bicester

Friday 24 December

Mass at 2 pm, 6 pm and 9 pm, Bicester

Mass at 4 pm, Hethe

Midnight Mass, Bicester

Saturday 25 December

Mass at 9 am, Hethe

Mass at 9 am, Bicester

Mass at 11 am, Bicester

Parish of the Sacred Heart and Our Lady, Aston-le-Walls

Saturday 25 December

Christmas Day Mass at 10.45 am

Church of St Peter and St Paul, King's Sutton

Saturday 25 December

Christmas Day Mass at 9 am

[Please do check your Parish Newsletters for any updates,
especially in light of the current situation]

Calling all families whose children are taking exams in 2022



Following the lack of equipment brought to the recent Yr11 mock exams, may we suggest the following stocking fillers:-

Ruler
Calculator
Pencils
Black pens
Eraser
Sharpener
Protractor
Pair of compasses

Thank you for your help in this matter!



Careers guidance for Year 11s

Now is the time when Year 11s need to start thinking about where they want to be in September.

Sixth Forms, Colleges, Apprenticeships and other training providers are all looking for applicants!

Here are some of the places that our Year 11s went to last year...

Other places to go for advice and guidance:

- Look in the 'Careers' folder on the VLE
- <https://icould.com/>
- <https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/>
- Login to **eClips** – Password: faisca27
- Ask your form tutor to book a careers advice appointment
- Email Mrs Harris- lharris@bgn.oxon.sch.uk



Where to next?



Senior Maths Challenge

BGN took part in the Senior Maths Challenge this November, for the first time since 2019. To limit possible cross-infection, we took the Challenge during normal lessons to avoid mixed year groups in an exam hall, which meant shortening the time from the normal 90 minutes to just 60.

Those who won bronze certificates did amazingly well, given the restricted time they had. They were:

Freddie Tyzack	Year 13	Best in Year 13, Best in School
Chris Charles	Year 13	Best in Year 13, Best in School
Pamela Hawkins	Year 13	
Abin Parvelikudy	Year 13	
Dan Nutt	Year 13	
James Thornley	Year 13	
Emily Rowe	Year 12	
Martha Ssenoga	Year 12	
Vanisha d'Souza	Year 12	
Amy Fallowfield	Year 11	Best in Year 11
Jack Mawle	Year 11	Best in Year 11
Hannah Sacaria	Year 11	



**United Kingdom
Mathematics Trust**

Well done to everyone who took part, particularly to the certificate winners!

[Mrs Lunel—Head of Maths]

'Six The Musical' at Milton Keynes Theatre

On 24 November, a group of extremely keen GCSE and A Level students from Drama and Music were lucky enough to see 'Six The Musical' at Milton Keynes Theatre. The evening was excellent from start to finish and special thanks go to Mrs Coleman for agreeing to support us on the trip.

All students had a wonderful time as the music itself was very catchy and well written. The performers in 'Six The Musical' were a group of talented ladies, either singing on

stage or performing in the band. The group's musical skills, combined with comedic timing, were thrilling to watch. Students were very eager to sing the songs outside once the performance had finished!



dents themselves represented the school brilliantly and were a credit to BGN, both on the coach and in the theatre.

We look forward to the next theatre trip!

*[Mr Hornby and Mrs Furniss
Expressive Arts Department]*



Gardeners World comes to BGN



A big thank you to everyone who supported the RE Department's 'Plant a Plant' initiative as part of the CAFOD Go Green Campaign. In the end we received loads of donations from staff, parents and pupils, especially of seeds and bulbs, but some terrific shrubs too. I would like to thank Mrs Johnson particularly for her incredible work on Thursday 11 November. She really made great progress in very hard

were overwhelmed with how many pupil volunteers there were one Thursday last week! For some, this service may have had the ulterior motive of getting them out of lessons, but most of them genuinely wanted to help and the work wasn't easy; some pupils used up all their lunchtime to dig holes for the bulbs. We think we might have planted over 500 bulbs! We are just hoping they all come up now... but only time will tell.

Also thank you to Mrs Mawn and Mr Smith who swept up all the mud we had trampled off the holy grass onto the paving stones, and knocked off our wellies. Finally, thank you to our wonderful cleaning team in the Corrigan building that night because there was a trail of muddy footprints left by those going back and forth with watering cans, which they kindly mopped up for us.

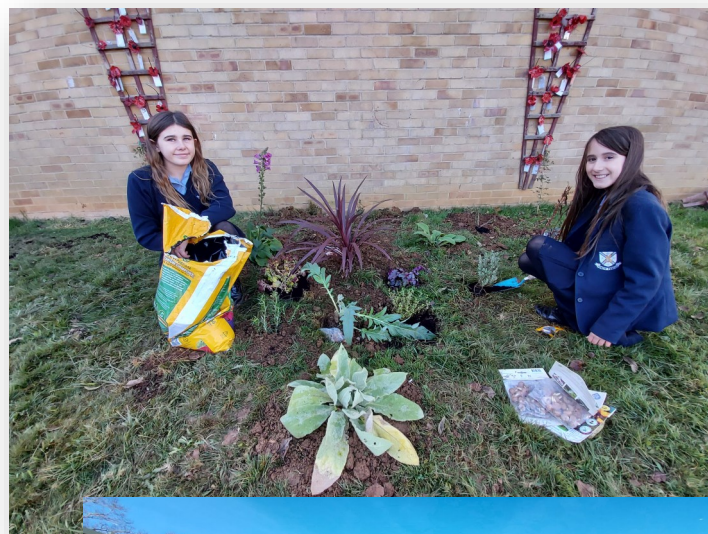
It was a huge team effort and we are very grateful for the part everyone played. We had lots of seeds donated which we haven't scattered yet, but we will wait until February. Thank you for whatever part you played.

[Miss Smith—Assistant Head]



ground, supported by other colleagues and pupils from our Learning Base, and utilising her extensive gardening experience to help us formulate a plan.

A couple of weeks later, the RE staff spent some time digging a few holes and planting before it got dark and then we



Alton Castle—I'm a BGN student... get me out of here!



Alton Castle was a great spiritual and physical experience. Everyone did many fun activities like survival, mountain biking and low ropes. All of us spent more time outdoors and enjoyed being away from the stress in our lives. During our activities we met a lot of new people and learned more about them.

In low ropes, which is a type of obstacle course, we all had to use teamwork to complete everything in the obstacle course. In survival we learned about how to make shelters, purify water and how to make our own fire. We finished our activity off by roasting marshmallows, which was delicious. In mountain biking we went up long trails and enjoyed the beautiful scenery around us. While doing all these activities we learned a bit more about each other.

Alton Castle is a great experience and it really taught me to go outside more often and appreciate what is around me. Alton Castle also helped me grow closer to my friends and make new ones.

[Anna Josit—Form 7 Devereux]

I loved Alton Castle; it was such fun. My favourite activity was the low ropes. I loved this activity because we all got to work together as a team! I also liked it because the obstacles were A LOT harder than they

looked! I loved my dorm because I was with my two best friends [we also had our own ensuite].

All the activities were normally an hour long and I also found that having our own free time was good. On the Thursday you could buy sweets, and on the Friday you could buy stationery and badges from the tuck-shop. The activities I did were mountain biking, trekking, low ropes and survival. In mountain biking we went for a very long ride and there was one steep hill you had to go up and down. Going down was really scary and going up was really hard work. When we went trekking we went up lots of steep hills and in some places it was really rocky. We also crossed a stream via a bridge.

On Thursday morning after breakfast, survival was our first activity. It was freezing cold but luckily we had hot chocolate and marshmallows after it. In survival we learnt how to build a tent in case we had to leave our houses for a natural disaster. We also learnt how to make a fire but, by that point, my hands were utterly cold! I even wore seven layers, and I was still cold!

[Grace O'Leary—Form 7 Assisi]



Alton Castle [continued....2]

On 23 March we went on a retreat to Alton Castle. The journey lasted approximately two hours. When we arrived, we walked on a stone ramp to see the castle.

We went into a building called the 'Discovery Centre' where we were introduced to the team, in other words the staff which would be taking care of us during the retreat. They announced what group we were going to be put in and what activities we were going to do.

After that we went to eat, where they offered us spaghetti with squash, then we went to sleep in our comfy dorms which had bunk beds for us to sleep on.

We attended Mass in the church on the second night and a disco right after that. We all enjoyed it.

After sleep, we packed up our things, had breakfast and went and did our activities. One of the activities was mountain biking and when we finished it we were full of mud everywhere!

When it was time to go home we packed up our belongings and couldn't wait to go back home and meet our parents again.

[Marcello Prosperini Pizzini—Form 7 Assisi]



Alton Castle was a very fun retreat that Year 7s had the opportunity to go on. We connected with God while having a good time! We got to make lots of new friends and had the opportunity to bike, hike, do survival, and some groups even got to do low ropes and archery! We were also given yummy meals and hot chocolate. On Thursday we were surprised by Father Chris and we celebrated Mass which was followed with a disco and talent show! We also got a tuck shop where we could get sweets and on Friday we could buy souvenirs! The trip was really fun and was a nice way to connect with others.

[Imogen Devonish—Form 7 Edith Stein]



BGN students support BBC Children in Need

We are delighted to announce that the cake sale on 19 November raised £230.51 for BBC Children in Need. We are very grateful to all those who made it possible and supported this event in any way. We were thrilled by how many of you sent in cakes.



There was a great atmosphere in school and many of our Sixth Formers were roped in at the last minute to help with logistics and support.

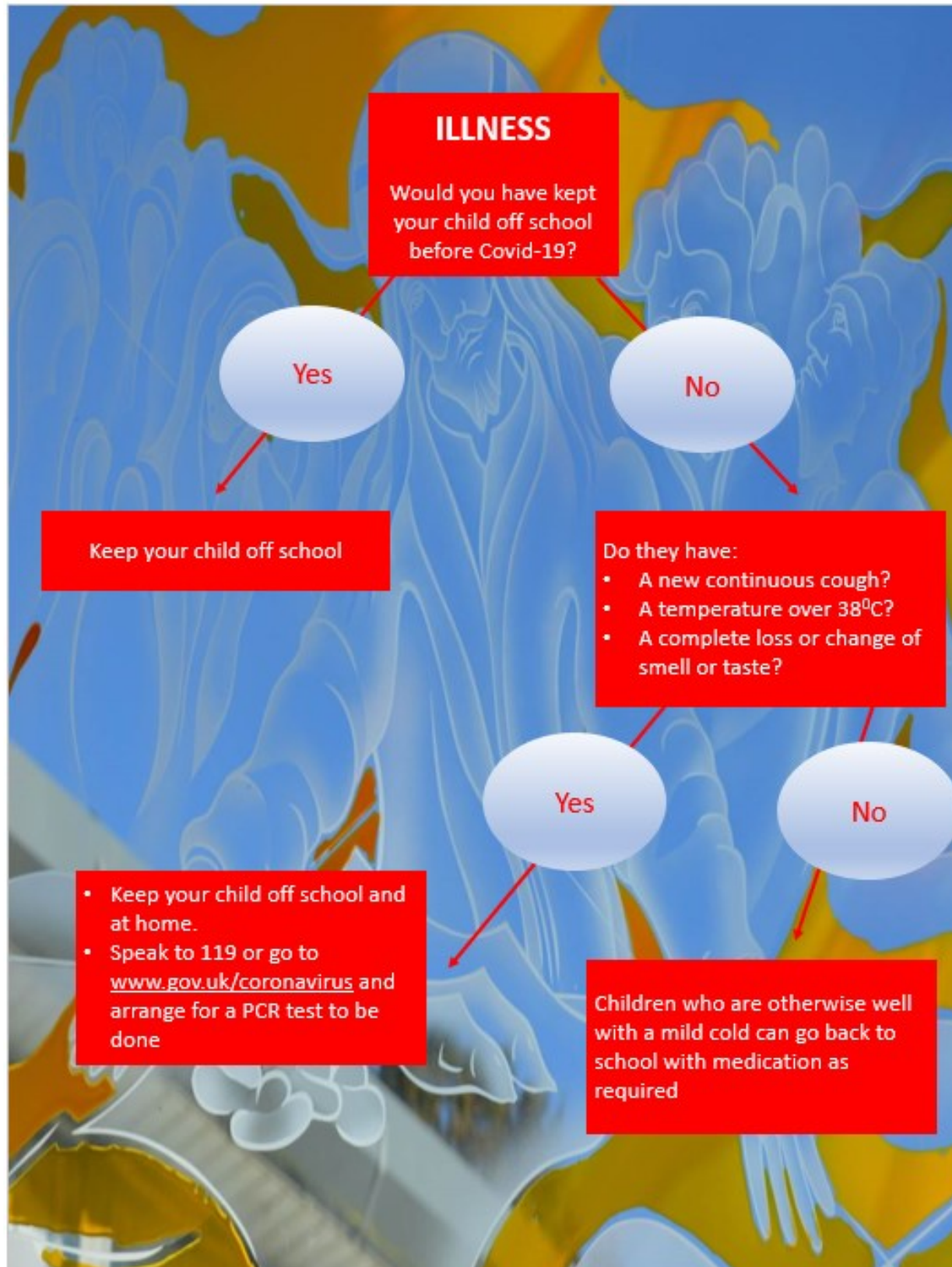
We are very proud of Mariealle Baisin and Eva Jones from 7 Calcutta [both pictured below], who had the idea of supporting this wonderful charity and who were selling the cakes. Incidentally, Mariealle also designed the poster below.

Thank you also to the Year 8s who carried on selling the cakes during the second break and to all the staff who supported us too by buying and eating them!

[Mrs Nutt—Head of Year 7]



Attendance DOES matter



Primary Hockey Festival

On Thursday 11 November Year 9 Blessed George Napier students supported Mr Mawn to deliver the Banbury Area Year 5/6 In2Hockey Festival at Wykham Park Academy. Fifty children from five schools comprising Bishop Loveday, Orchard Fields, Hillview, Harriers and Hanwell Fields took part.



As schools arrived, BGN Student Leaders took teams through the In2Hockey rules, warm-up activities and practice games. The competition involved teams playing in a round robin format, umpired competently by BGN Leaders who offered guidance to all participants throughout the event. It was an enjoyable morning where teams

improved their understanding of the In2Hockey rules, showed lots of teamwork, sportsmanship and plenty of self-belief. Participants were also signposted to further opportunities within their local community at Banbury Hockey Club.



Year 9 Hockey Leaders

Pietra De Lorenzi Cancellier Magagnin, Scarlett Vedmore, Ruben Buckner-Rowley, Oliver Chadbourne, Katy Rayner, Scarlett Flack, Oliwia Danielewicz, Judit Pinto Lopez and Emma Murphy.

[Mr Mawn —School Sport Co-ordinator]

The feedback received was as follows

“Leaders were very good and incredibly supportive.”

“It was good to see umpires explaining decisions to players.”

“It has been great playing hockey against other schools.”

“It didn’t matter that we didn’t win, we enjoyed it.”

“Everything was fun.”

“The games were well led, with good communication between BGN Leaders and participants.”

“I enjoyed competing.”



Year 2 Multi-Skills Festival

On Thursday 9 December, 36 Year 2 children from Orchard Fields, St Joseph's and William Morris Primary Schools participated in the BGN Cluster Multi-Skills Festival in the Sports Hall at BGN.

Schools took part in various games and skill-based activities. These included tag games working on evasive skills, throwing, and catching, striking, and fielding, target games, and team building challenges. The activities were confidently planned and delivered by 12 Year 8 Student Leaders.

During the Festival, the 'Spirit of the Games' value of '*determination*' was a key focus area. All participants and Student Leaders displayed this in abundance; always trying their best and never giving up despite any difficult challenges they faced on the day. The children received '*determination*' certificates and stickers to recognise their efforts. Well done to everyone who took part.

Year 8 Student Leaders

Frankie Flynn, Sarah Chamczynska, Sophie Cummings, Kitty Holder, Lilah Morrison, Atena Sowinska, Daisy Sullivan, Alice Tustian, Gaby Twelvetrees, Stephanie Sakyeiwaa, Maria Urbaniak and Kathleen Russell.



The feedback received was as follows

"Excellent engagement from young leaders and they were careful to include even our more reluctant children."

"The Young Leaders were excellent: confident and clear with instructions; lovely with the children, and really encouraging."

"Children really enjoyed the games which were well organised."

"The Leaders were very clear when explaining and patient with some of our children who find it tricky to join in."

"The games were fun."



If you would like to watch the recording of the BGN Youth Choir Carol Service then please visit this link:

<https://www.mcnmedia.tv/Cameras/Player/32427>

BGN LOURDES PILGIMAGE 2022



As the congregation were unable to attend the BGN Youth Choir Carol Service this year, the Lourdes team were unable to collect donations in the usual manner.

However, if you would still like to support our fundraising efforts, please do donate on our JustGiving page:-

https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/lourdesfundraising-emilyrowe?utm_term=DPQ2NJ7eR

