



December 2023

Newsletter

A word from the Headteacher

Advent leading to Christmas is one of our favourite times of the year at BGN: a time to come together and celebrate our wonderful community and the gifts and talents of our amazing students and staff.



Those of us lucky enough to attend the recent Christmas Concert can confirm that the musical and theatrical traditions of BGN are stronger than ever. We also practiced for the St John's Carol Service which was held on Thursday 14 December and students have been carol singing at a number of care homes and supermarkets. In addition, we have been busy collecting items for the local food bank with the Reverse Advent Calendar initiative.

This term we held our Senior Citizens' Christmas lunch and whole school Christmas dinner. My thanks go to our wonderful Catering department and to our staff and students for making this happen. It has been a truly magical term!

It is with much sadness we say goodbye to our School Nurse, Margaret Batsel, who is retiring after many years with us. We will all miss her. We also say goodbye to Matt Dabrowski from our Lettings team and Nicola Vipond from the Science department and wish them every success in their new roles. Finally our congratulations go to Laura Gines who is now on maternity leave following the birth of her baby son, Louie.

May I wish all our families and friends of BGN a joyful, safe and peaceful Christmas.

NOTICE

Please ensure your contact details are up-to-date so that you don't miss out on important communications, and should we need to contact you in an emergency.

To help us with the lunch queues, please ensure your child's lunch account remains in credit.

Don't forget to label all uniform and PE kit so that lost property can be returned to your child.

Please remember not to drive down Addison Road when dropping off, or picking up, your child from school.

Important diary dates

Wednesday 20 December

School closes at 12.30 pm for the Christmas holidays

Monday 8 January

INSET day—school closed to all pupils

Tuesday 9 January

School reopens at 8.40 am to all pupils
[Week B]

Thursday 1 February

Year 9 Options' Evening

Friday 9 February

School closes at 3.20 pm for the half-term holiday

Monday 12 February to

Friday 16 February

Half-term holiday

Monday 19 February

School re-opens at 8.40 am to all pupils
[Week A]

Thursday 22 February

Year 9 Parents' Evening

Christmas Mass times in our parishes

Parish of St John the Evangelist, Banbury

Sunday 24 December

Mass at 6 pm

Midnight Mass at 12 pm

Monday 25 December

Mass at 8.45 am

Mass at 11.15 am

Parish of St Joseph the Worker, Banbury

Sunday 24 December

Mass at 5 pm and 9 pm

Monday 25 December

Mass at 10 am

St Thomas of Canterbury, Wroxton

Monday 25 December

Mass at 8.30 am

Parish of the Immaculate Conception, Bicester

Sunday 24 December

Mass at 2 pm and 6 pm, Bicester

Mass at 8 pm Hethe

11.30 pm Carols followed by Midnight Mass, Bicester

Monday 25 December

Mass at 9 am, Bicester

Mass at 11 am, Bicester

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

Sunday 24 December

Mass at 4 pm, Carols at 8.30 pm and Mass at 9 pm

Monday 25 December

Mass at 11 am

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

Monday 25 December

Mass at 9 am

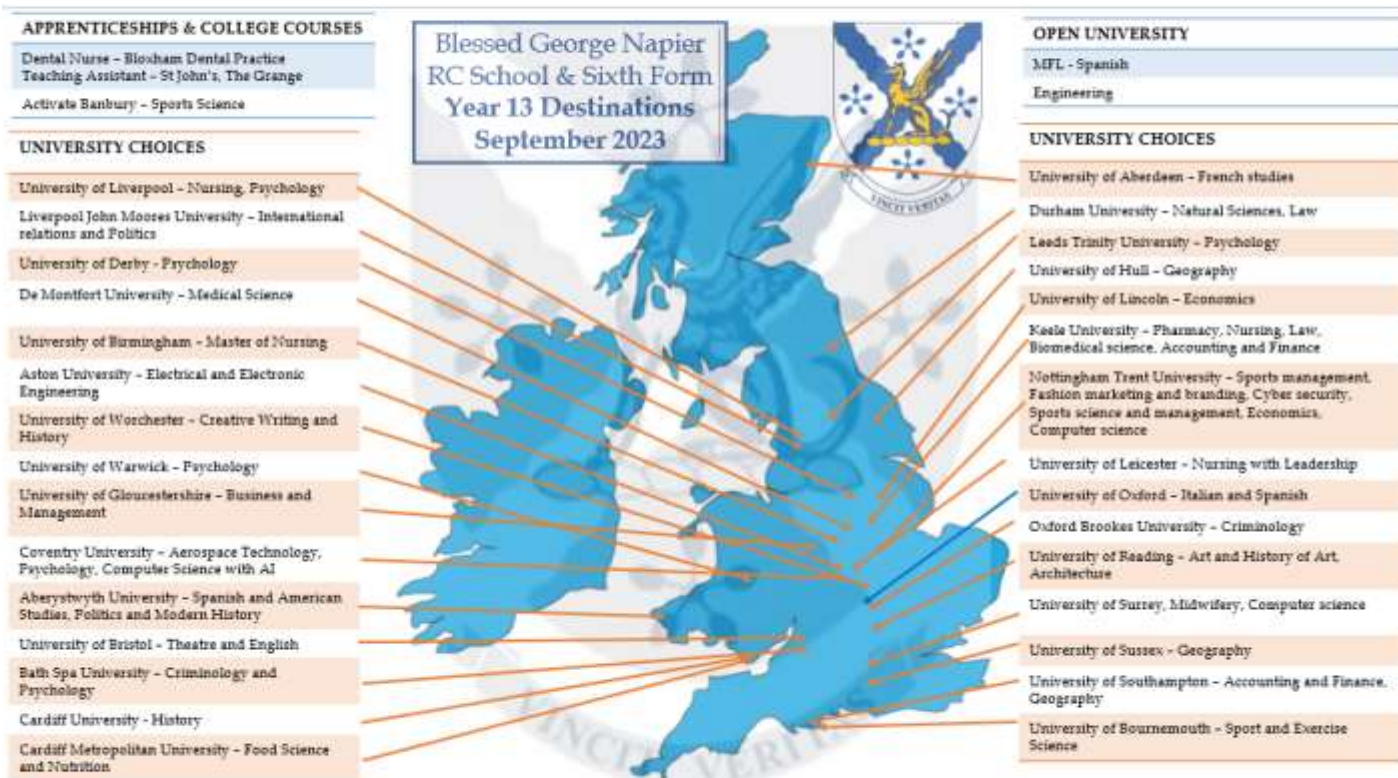
[Please do check your Parish Newsletters for any updates]

Sixth Form Destinations 2023

Our Sixth Formers have truly spread their wings and are attending universities across the UK following the completion of their studies with us. The destinations map shows which courses our young people are studying; some at Open University and others taking up apprenticeships to train for their career.

University courses are an investment for the future, and many have chosen this route, pursuing a wide range of studies such as law, nursing, engineering, computing, languages, psychology and international politics. Some have deferred their place, preferring to take a gap year and are working or going abroad as far as Australia.

What an exciting time, being free and adventurous, and going into the big wide world!



Medical Society

Enterprising scientists have set-up a Medical Society where they give presentations on Science topics. The aim is to enhance presentation and interview skills in readiness for university interviews.

The first presentation was given on Tuesday 19 September in Lab 17 at lunchtime, where Esha talked about 'Applying to Medicine', Phoebe spoke about 'Applying to Dentistry', and Sophie presented on 'Applying to Veterinary Medicine'. This talk was attended by a number of our Year 12 students who will also be presenting topics in the coming months. The second presentation was given by Sophie, who spoke about 'Anaesthesia', and further meetings are planned every fortnight. Any interested students in Years 10–12 are very welcome to come along and join us.

[Mrs Ellul—Careers Guidance KS5]

Year 11s—a shining example to BGN

Year 11 have made a fantastic start to the year. They have shown a mature approach to their learning, setting a great standard for the lower school.

We were delighted to welcome so many parents and students to the Year 11 Information Evening held at the beginning of the current academic year. This highlighted KS4 expectations, key dates for the year and revision tips for parents amongst other things. Parents' Evening closely followed, which was well attended and it was a pleasure to meet so many supportive parents and guardians. It was an invaluable evening where students, along with their parents, had the opportunity to discuss with their teachers what is going well, and how they can be even better in the future.

Lots of students are attending extra revision sessions after school which is an invaluable part of their independent study. These revision sessions offer a supportive environment in which students receive high quality teacher contact time to go over specific topic areas they are struggling with. It is advised they attend at least three sessions per week to help them reach their full potential when they take their exams this summer. It is brilliant to see so many of our students already committed to their studies.

At the end of Year 10, students applied to be BGN Prefects, ready for the year ahead. The Prefects were selected using a rigorous process and have made a really positive start in upholding their responsibilities around school. Their first foray into this role was to guide prospective parents and Year 6 students around on our Open Evening held in September. The feedback we received from those visiting the school was exceptional. They are a shining example to BGN and I hope all the students in the lower school aspire to be like them.

The Year 11s sat their first round of mocks at the end of November, where they demonstrated a real sense of purpose and maturity. Students waited tentatively as they received their results, sealed in an envelope, just as they will in August. It was lovely to see how happy the students were, knowing that their hard work had paid off. Long may it continue.

I wish every student in Year 11 a successful year ahead and joyful Christmas.

Study hard and stay focused!



[Miss O'Neill—Head of Year 11]

Year 10 begin the year well

Year 10 have begun the year extremely well focusing on starting their GCSEs and working hard. Teachers have been positive about their classes and are enjoying working with the year group.

The tutor team consists of Mrs Morgan, Mr Parish, Mrs Allen, Mrs Tucker, Mr Cross, Mrs Castle and Miss Williams. We are working hard on ensuring that all students are ready to learn and focused on their studies. Please do contact your child's form tutor if you have any issue that you would like to discuss.

As you can see below, many students have achieved large amounts of epraise points already. The students named below are the top achievers so far and I am sure we will be adding to this list as we progress through the academic year:-

Eleanor	Form 10 Calcutta	106 points
Freddie	Form 10 Calcutta	100 points
Grace	Form 10 Edith Stein	100 points
Sophie	Form 10 Calcutta	100 points
Isla	Form 10 Calcutta	99 points
Camilla	Form 10 Calcutta	95 points
Chloe	Form 10 Calcutta	86 points
Kamil	Form 10 Assisi	84 points
Taqwa	Form 10 Assisi	84 points
Alice	Form 10 Calcutta	83 points

We look forward to continuing to support your child in the coming months.

[Mr Medwin—Head of Year 10]

Year 8

Year 8 have made a fantastic start to the year. So far, we have been investigating a variety of PSHE topics such as what makes a healthy relationship, and how to manage our physical and emotional health.

Our students continue to shine, with our top epraise performers being:-

Elisha	Form 8 Calcutta
Ella	Form 8 Calcutta
Harrison	Form 8 Bakhita
Millie	Form 8 Calcutta
Daiana	Form 8 Bakhita

We look forward to the Glasbury trip, which is due to take place early in the New Year. Students will have the opportunity to partake in a variety of outdoor pursuits which include: caving, canoeing, rock climbing and hiking.

[Miss Smith—Head of Year 8]

Year 10 Soli House Residential 10-13 October 2023

We left the school grounds at around 9 am for our residential to Soli House. On the bus we were all excited, anticipating our stay and what delights lay ahead. When we arrived we met the amazing staff leaders! They were young, enthusiastic and really kind.



On the first day we participated in lots of fun games which helped to develop our team building skills. We especially liked the escape room! In the evening we had a session getting to know each other and ourselves better.

On the second day, we had the opportunity to complete a variety of activities, among which were low ropes, cycling and archery. Everyone loved what they did and had a really good time. When we got back we had some free time, followed by a lovely dinner and then another fun team session.



On the third day we took a leisurely stroll into the nearby village. We got to see Alton Castle, which was amazing! We were also treated to a bit of a History lesson about the castle – which was really interesting! When we arrived at the café, we had the best drinks of our lives—or at least I think so! On returning to Soli House we played some fun games, followed by a thought provoking night time Mass. The Mass was inclusive, enjoyable and was a very

good way to end our third day in our first religious retreat.



On the last and best (!) day, we visited Alton Towers! We all started the day by scanning our tickets. When we entered the park we immediately zoomed to the numerous attractions and had an excellent time with our friends. We ended the day by going into the shops and thinking about the best rides of the day—Galactica! It was a long drive home, but enjoyable.



The Soli House retreat was a really good experience, which we all loved. Thank you to all the Soli House staff and to Mr Medwin, Ms Smith and Mr Williams for looking after us.

[Alfie, Noah, Joseph and Camilla—Year 10 students]

Welcome to Year 9

I would like to introduce myself and say what an honour it is to help support and guide the children in Year 9. Having followed them up from Year 8, it has been a pleasure to get to know them individually and allow them to build their trust in me. I will continue to help develop their self-confidence and independence, whilst instilling our Gospel Values. The Year 9 team hopes your child feels valued in school and knows that there is always someone they can talk to, if needed.

Our Year 9 tutors are:

9 Assisi	Mr Hoad	email: choad@bgn.oxon.sch.uk
9 Bakhita	Mrs Sharpley	email: csha9600@bgn.oxon.sch.uk
9 Calcutta	Ms Farndon	email: zfar2489@bgn.oxon.sch.uk
9 Devereux	Mrs Thornton	email: KThornton@bgn.oxon.sch.uk
9 Edith Stein	Mr Proudfoot	email: ppro5816@bgn.oxon.sch.uk

Tutors should be the first point of contact for most issues that arise.

Mrs Golland is the Pastoral Manager for KS3 and can be contacted for any queries surrounding pastoral support for your child, including mental wellbeing. You can contact Mrs Golland via email on LGolland@bgn.oxon.sch.uk

Our Eco Mission Team

Our Eco House Mission Team were busy this term planting the two seedlings kindly donated to us by Carmen Lovejoy. We have planted them in the Chapel garden; one of the boys who helped with the planning said that he would be able to watch it grow during his time at BGN and he would look forward to seeing how high it was by the time he was in Sixth Form! Our Year 9 team of Eco House Missionaries also completed a litter pick during their lunchtime, picking up over 100 pieces of litter between them. Well done for making our BGN community a cleaner and better place to be. I am very proud of you all.



[Mrs Terry—Head of Year 9]



Year 7

I am very proud of every Year 7 pupil as they have all tried their best to settle in and become part of our BGN family. The pupils have risen to the transition challenge very well and their eagerness to work hard, follow our Gospel values, and join in all the extra-curricular activities fills me with happiness.

The Year 7 team for 2023/24 are:-

Head of Year and Pastoral Manager	Ms Phillips
Assisi	Mr Kenny
Bakhita	Miss Carter
Calcutta	Mr Walker
Devereux	Ms Burak
Edith Stein	Mr Pike

Please do feel free to contact us at any time if you would like more information about your child's education, or have any concerns. We always do our utmost to be as supportive as possible.

Many of our Year 7 pupils volunteered at our Open Evening held in September and it was wonderful to see their confidence grow, along with enthusiasm for our school, even though it was just a few weeks into their secondary journey.

Our Welcome Mass was just beautiful. The singing of our BGN favourite hymns was wonderful to hear, and the atmosphere was both prayerful and joyful. It is lovely to see parents interacting with staff and meeting other new parents for the first time.

At the end of November, we held our residential trip to Alton Castle. As predicted, it was very crisp and cold. However, the weather did not stop us from having fun outdoors, as well as preparing for Christmas through our Advent programme. During each activity, there was a chance to stop, meditate and reflect on the Christmas story.

I hope you have a wonderful Christmas break and look forward to meeting many more of you over the coming year at the various events held in school.

[Ms Phillips—Head of Year 7]

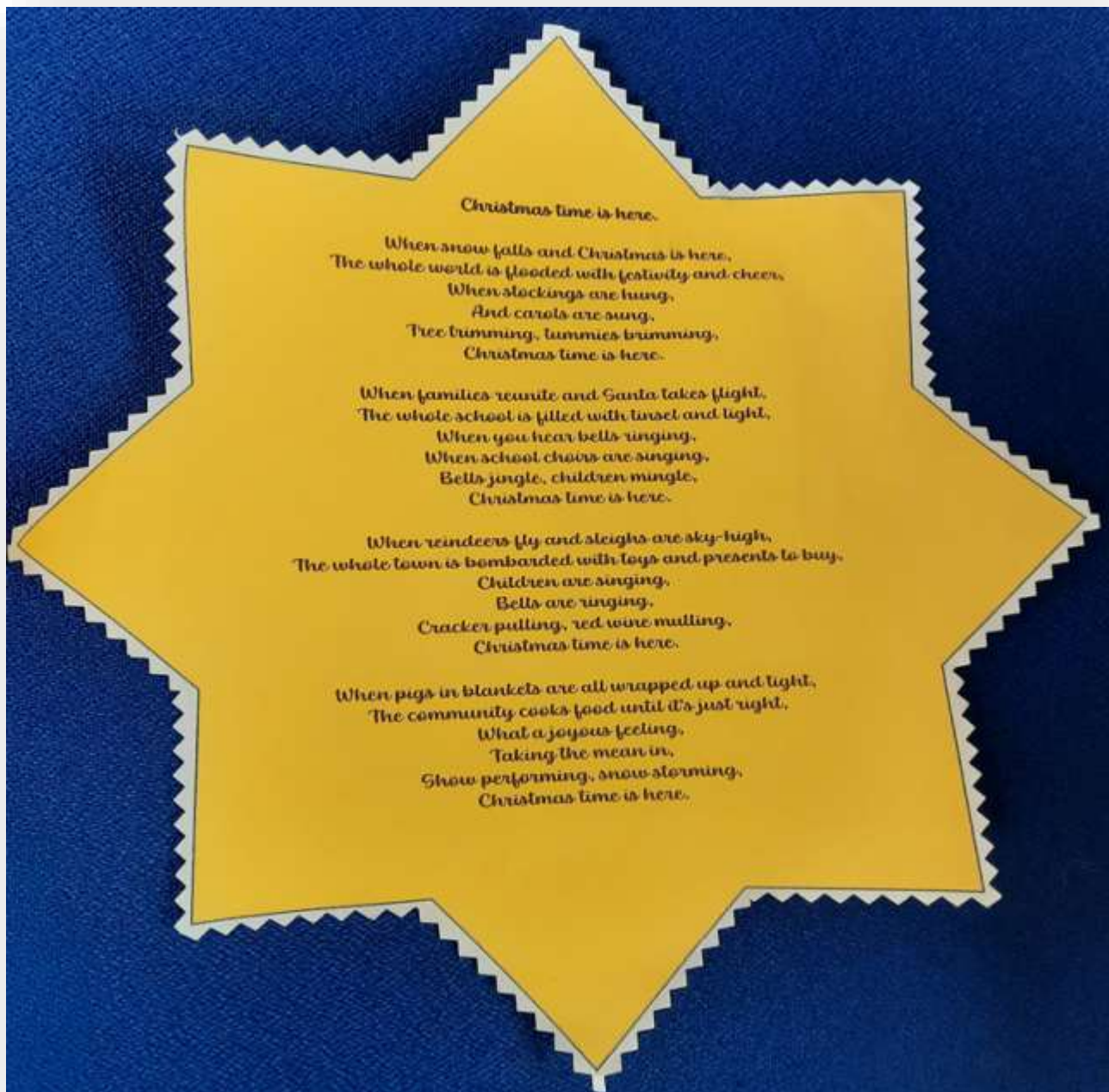


Year 7 Christmas poetry and story competition

Christmas started early in Year 7, as we launched a Christmas Poetry and Story Competition just after half-term. Firstly, we have been very impressed by the number of entries and secondly, the quality of the writing.

It was a lovely start to our team meeting, judging all the high-quality pieces of work and admiring the artistic presentation of some of them. Many congratulations go to our winner... Alice in Form 7 Assisi.

[Ms Phillips—Head of Year 7]



BGN celebrates European Day of Languages

Every year at BGN we celebrate European Day of Languages! This year our Year 10 language leaders, along with our amazing MFL Department, organised a very interactive languages day. Around the school we had lots of different posters advertising the event and, in the theme of languages day, some were in French, Spanish and English.

At lunch, there was a variety of foreign food options to open peoples' horizons to different new foods. With every piece of amazing foreign food was a little bit of information about that country's culture. From my experience the food was "incroyable". We are sure that everyone loved it. Throughout lunch, we had a variety of games given to students so they could learn more foreign words and this was really good. As well as this, we had some popular MFL songs such as 'out    ' or 'maintenant'; this was good for people to understand how to

pronounce certain words. There

were also Spanish and Polish songs played and I learned something new myself, even if my Polish pronunciation wasn't the best !



We had some of our favourite teachers on stage dancing around, which is something I will never forget. They even had me dancing around at one point. They did a conga around the hall which was just brilliant and something amazing to be part of.

Overall, European Day of Languages 2023 at BGN was a really good event which was amazingly inclusive and really good fun for everyone. I

would like to thank our language leaders and especially Madame Savin, Madame Morgan, Mr Kenny and Mrs Lewandowska who made the lunch come to life, and who may have even started a tradition at BGN school!



[Alfie —Form 10 Edith Stein]

Thank you Father Paschal



As we awaited the arrival of Father Sean Gough, our School Chaplain, we were delighted to welcome Father Paschal to celebrate our opening Mass of this academic year with us on Monday 11 September.

The Gospel reading of the day was about Jesus healing the man with the withered hand. Father Paschal took us directly to the scene of the healing in his sermon and really encouraged us to picture what it was like. He focused on how Jesus asked the man to do the one thing he couldn't, which was to 'stretch out his hand'. Father Paschal encouraged all of us to acknowledge our

weaknesses, whatever they may be, and reach out to God—whatever needs healing in our lives, we must reach out to God. It could be worries about friendships or nervousness about exams, whatever it is we must stretch out our hand.

His delivery was powerful with energy, singing and a clear message. Staff and students alike know that what we experienced in this Mass was indeed something special.

Father Paschal travelled from Essex to be with us – on his day off! We are so grateful to him for celebrating Mass with us. He will keep our intentions for prayer with him and I hope that we will continue to pray for him too.



Thank you Father Paschal for this wonderful, inspirational celebration.

[Mrs Mawn—Assistant Headteacher]

Welcome to Father Sean

Fr Sean Gough joined the BGN community in September as our School Chaplain. He has been a priest for just over three years, spending his first years in Wolverhampton before moving to Banbury. He trained to be a priest at Oscott College in Birmingham, taking seven years to train for the priesthood in total! He originates from Walsall in the West Midlands, where most of his family still live. He is passionate about working with young people, particularly sharing the good news of Jesus Christ with them. In his free time he enjoys travelling, music and getting out and exploring this incredible world!

Expansion of the mind

Our Year 12 and Year 13 Religious Studies students were delighted to accept an invitation to attend St Edward's School in Oxford on Monday 25 September.

The day was focused on Philosophy of Religion and there were a wide range of guest speakers, the most prestigious of whom was Richard Swinburne who discussed the question of *'Do we have a soul?'*. Other guests included Alex O'Connor who was debating from an atheistic perspective, with Dr Max Baker Hytch who was arguing from the perspective of a theist. Clare Williams gave a lecture on *'Which worldview makes sense of justice?'* and the day finished with a really interesting interview with John Lennox entitled *'My Story: God and Science'*.

Fifteen other schools had responded to the invitation and all were invited to take part in the debates by posing questions to the guest speakers.

Our philosophical bodies were also nourished by the hospitality offered from St Edward's School, which included refreshments on arrival and at breaktime, and a two-course lunch to finish the day!

What an incredible day!

[Mrs Mawn—Assistant Headteacher]



Bingo!

We had a FULL HOUSE on Friday 13 October [not so unlucky for some] as our Bingo Caller, Mrs Wagstaff, took to the stage.

It was a fun filled evening where we had the opportunity to welcome lots of new faces supporting the Friends of BGN. There were prizes galore, varying from Afternoon Tea in Wroxton, a £20 Entertainer Voucher, and a James Boswell cut and blow dry, all gratefully donated by local businesses.

There was a buzz in the room across all ages and you could feel the wait and anticipation for that lucky number to be pulled out, filling the room for every line and house call.

We would like to thank the Friends of BGN for all the work they put into organising this event which raised the staggering amount of £500+.

[Mrs Mawn—Assistant Headteacher]

Go on and bake my day!

On Thursday 28 and Friday 29 September 2023 we held a MacMillan 'coffee and cake event' in the staffroom at BGN. Cakes were delivered by past and present staff members, resulting in an amazing array of delights for everyone to enjoy. The event was well received as cake is always a winner in the BGN staffroom! We managed to raise a total of £234.25, which was a brilliant result. We would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who so generously supported this really worthwhile cause.

[Mrs Mason—Maths Department]



Chomp: an ever-expanding photography genre!

Key Stage 3 students all took part in our very first Photography Challenge. Each term, students will be challenged with a different theme that they are free to explore in their own unique and creative way. The first challenge was called '*Chomp! Food Photography is an ever-expanding photography genre*'. In professional commercial photography, its output is used in advertisements, magazines, packaging, menus or cookbooks. Social media has also created a platform for aspiring photographers to have their work seen on a global scale. Key Stage 3 took creative inspiration from the work of Marc Haydon, Davide Luciano and Sara Ali for this challenge.

Mrs Castle and Miss Williams were incredibly inspired and impressed by all the original photography submitted by our students. Photography badges worth 25 epraise points were awarded to Summer, Adam, Chai, Bella and Lexie in Year 7. Lexie was also honoured with Best in Year 7 and Overall Grand Champion Best Image for the Challenge.



In Year 8 Julia, Alisha, Gianluca, Taylor and Daiana were honoured for their images, with Daiana winning the title of Best in Year 8.



The Year 9 students honoured were Ishit, Benedek, Don, Emily and Marcia, with Marcia earning her award for Best in Year 9.

Term 2's Photography Challenge: *Forced Perspective* is available on the VLE and will close at 12.30 pm on 20 December 2023. While participation is compulsory for Year 7-9 students, everyone is welcome to enter and be considered for a prize. We look forward to seeing the entries.

[Mrs Castle—Art Department]

We are on a mission...

On Thursday 30 November, the House Mission team held their first meeting of the current academic year. The focus for our House Stewards involved having a local, regional, and global view on how we can improve the living situations and educational environment around us.

Pupils were swift and thorough in their discussions of where BGN pupils could impact not only their own school, but also the wider community of Banbury and North Oxfordshire.

The House Mission team met within their House Patrons [Assisi, Bakhita, Calcutta, Devereux, and Edith Stein], and discussions were led by the relevant House Captain from the Pupil Leadership Team.

Pupils were keen to think about how the House Patrons and our Gospel values could be represented artistically in the new building, and how all of us at BGN could improve our outreach to the local community via the reverse advent calendar for our local food banks.

The House Stewards also discussed ways in which we could reduce our plastic waste, and how to develop a more ecologically-minded way of disposing of our litter.

A new quizzing platform was also talked about that would send rice to the UN World Food Programme, and how each tutor group could be involved in competitions to raise awareness of both solidarity and the dignity of the poor in Catholic Social Teaching.

[Mrs Heywood—House and Rewards Lead]



We are on a mission [continued]

The first House Mission team meeting this academic year was particularly productive as all year groups collaborated successfully to share ideas to enhance the Catholic appearance of the school; all Houses contributed numerous suggestions that directly represented KS3 and KS4.

Conversations were directed towards how Blessed George Napier can assist in serving the local, national and global community as stewards of Catholic social teachings.

House Steward Elle said: “It was an amazing opportunity to voice opinions to the House Captains and I eagerly anticipate the next Mission team meeting”.

House Steward Mizpah said: *“It was really interactive and inclusive and I felt positive that the school took my ideas into consideration”.*

[Alice—Bakhita House Captain]



Blood Brothers—a tragic musical!

Last term, we were fortunate to obtain tickets to see a production of Willy Russell's *Blood Brothers* at the Oxford Playhouse. *Blood Brothers* is a text we study for GCSE Literature and it was a great opportunity to be able to take some Year 11 pupils to see a matinee performance of this play.

It certainly didn't disappoint – it was captivating from start to finish and we all went home with the songs in our heads for quite a time.

Year 11 benefitted enormously from seeing the play; it brought it to life and gave pupils a much deeper understanding of characters and important themes.

Thank you Year 11 for your impeccable behaviour at the theatre and for being such good company too! Matteo has written a review of the performance below.

[Mrs Sharpley—English Department]

The play '*Blood Brothers*' by Willy Russell is set in Liverpool in the early 1980s. It follows the lives of two twins, who are separated at birth, and are raised by two different families: one household in poverty and the other from a wealthy background. Despite the two families' best efforts to keep the twins away from one another, they meet up throughout their lives, which ultimately leads to their demise.

The theatre conducting the musical was able to capture the very basis of the play through the use of its lighting to create an ominous, eerie setting, as well as using visual effects to provide a realistic experience for the audience.

The cast chosen to perform '*Blood Brothers*' was more than exceptional to play out this tragedy; as a matter of fact they were outstanding. Each actor was able to captivate the audience through their voices, whether whilst singing, or how they imitated a Liverpudlian accent perfectly. In addition, the way they enacted the play enabled them to fully encompass the essence of each and every character in order to make this play a truly remarkable one.

In my opinion the trip as a whole was a stunning experience. I personally found the musical elements of the play the most incredible. This is because the musicians were able to create a perfect atmosphere for when there was either tension or joy. Likewise, the voices of each actor were almost unbelievable. Hearing their vocals echoing throughout the entire theatre during a song made the whole experience feel almost surreal. It was as though you were being taken on a spectacular journey. Another part which I particularly enjoyed, and which I am sure many of the audience would agree with, was the effects that the show used, especially during the ending sequence, where we were left at the edge of our

seats, waiting in anticipation for what was about to occur when, suddenly, 'BANG!' two guns went off, with smoke filling the air. This made the scene feel wonderfully realistic, and made many people in the audience, including myself, jump from being startled.

[Matteo —Form 11 Bakhita]



A big 'thank you' to all those who attended the recent Friends of BGN meeting. It was agreed the focus for future fundraising events would be to refurbish different areas around the school for the benefit of our pupils.



Our next meeting is due to take place on **Thursday 18 January** in school at 7 pm. Please do come along as we are always looking for new ideas and members.

Please find the details below of our next fundraising event. Tickets will be available in the New Year.

BLESSED GEORGE NAPIER

QUIZ NIGHT

FRIDAY 2ND FEBRUARY 2024

7 PM FOR 7.30 PM START

TICKETS - £5 PER PERSON
AVAILABLE FROM THE ONLINE
SCHOOL SHOP VIA THE SCHOOL WEBSITE

MAXIMUM OF EIGHT PEOPLE PER TEAM
PLEASE BRING PAYMENT RECEIPT WITH YOU ON THE NIGHT

LICENSED FUNDRAISING CASH ONLY BAR
PLUS NIBBLES!
[PLEASE DO NOT BRING YOUR OWN DRINKS]

QUIZ

Senior Maths Challenge

Last term, we had around 80 Mathematicians participate in the Senior Maths Challenge held in school on Tuesday 3 October. It was a pleasure to see the excellent standard of Mathematical problem-solving on display and I would like to congratulate all those who participated. My particular congratulations go to the certificate winners who are as follows:-

Intermediate Maths Challenge

Silver Certificate

Alfred	Year 13	[Joint best in school]
Harrison	Year 12	[Joint best in school]

Bronze Certificate

Darragh	Year 13
Jan	Year 13
Tom	Year 13
Alex	Year 13
Josh	Year 13

Isabel	Year 12
Jack	Year 12
Gabriela	Year 12



Abhinav	Year 11	[Best in year]
James	Year 11	
Josemari	Year 11	
Chris	Year 11	
Nathan	Year 11	
Matteo	Year 11	
Sean	Year 11	
Ewelina	Year 11	

[Mr Pike—Maths Department]

Bishop Stephen—always getting it Wright!



What a huge honour it was to be invited to St Chad's Cathedral on Friday 17 November for a Mass of thanksgiving for the work of Bishop Stephen in the Birmingham Diocese.

Bishop Stephen served as Parish Priest in St Joseph's, Banbury and was also our school Chaplain at BGN. He fully immersed himself in our school life, becoming a treasured member of our school community. He was only with us from 2003-2007, but he is still remembered fondly within the community. He travelled on Diocesan pilgrimage to Lourdes with us and gave a sermon at one of the Diocesan-led Masses that week.

I distinctly remember people commenting after the Mass that he would become a Bishop one day—and how 'Wright' they were! We continued to have contact with Bishop Stephen as his appointment to serve in one of the parishes in Burton-upon-Trent meant that Miss Smith was able to continue to be a great friend to him after he left Banbury. Indeed it was Bishop Stephen who led the Requiem Mass for Miss Smith last year.

Our current Year 13s met Bishop Stephen in Lourdes last year and were instantly taken by his manner and nature in the sermons that he gave and, as such, they were excited to be part of his Mass of thanksgiving. Those present at the Mass consisted of schools and parishes where Bishop Stephen had served and all were overjoyed to be part of the event. Bishop Stephen took the time to come and talk to our BGN students and he was so appreciative of our presence at the Mass. Our students were a credit to the school and a member of the congregation commented on how smart and well-behaved they were. He shared that it was whilst in Lourdes that he learnt he was appointed to the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle. His sermon was once again memorable as he contemplated the lives of Northern Saints and, in particular, St Cuthbert and finished with his line 'eee it's a long way back'!

Bishop Stephen [continued]

We are thrilled that Bishop Stephen continues to play a part in our school community and we continue to keep him in our prayers as he takes on the challenges of his new Diocese. We know that he will continue to get it 'Wright'.

The students we took were picked at random from those who are part of our Faith in Action group, Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist, and Altar Servers. Below are some of the comments they made about their experience.

It was an experience like no other. Truly wonderful to be able to be there. The joy was truly present during the participation of the Holy Mass.

[Shilpa]

It was an amazing Mass and a brilliant experience. I'm glad to have had the opportunity to be there.

[Will]

It was an amazing experience with a banging choir. Very spiritual and interesting.

[Catherine and Lily]

Meeting Bishop Stephen again was such a joy. He was our parish priest when we were young and seeing him accomplish so much throughout his journey was incredible.

[Darragh and Alfred]

An amazing experience wishing Bishop Stephen farewell.

[George]

It was an amazing service where everyone could reflect on God.

[Jonathan]

It was a majestic experience filled with an amazing and faithful atmosphere.

[Daniel]

The cathedral was beautiful, and I really enjoyed the Mass. It was a calming time to spend with God.

[Sarah]

Gorgeous and uplifting experience which we all enjoyed a lot.

[Leika]

It was a lovely experience. The cathedral was so beautiful. It was very nice to have a service like that.

[Adam]

[Mrs Mawn—Assistant Headteacher]

Faith in Action Award



Thirty students from Years 8, 9 and 10 have signed up to try and complete the Gold Faith in Action Award. This is a nationally recognised award in which the students gain credits by taking part in activities which put their Catholic faith into practice.

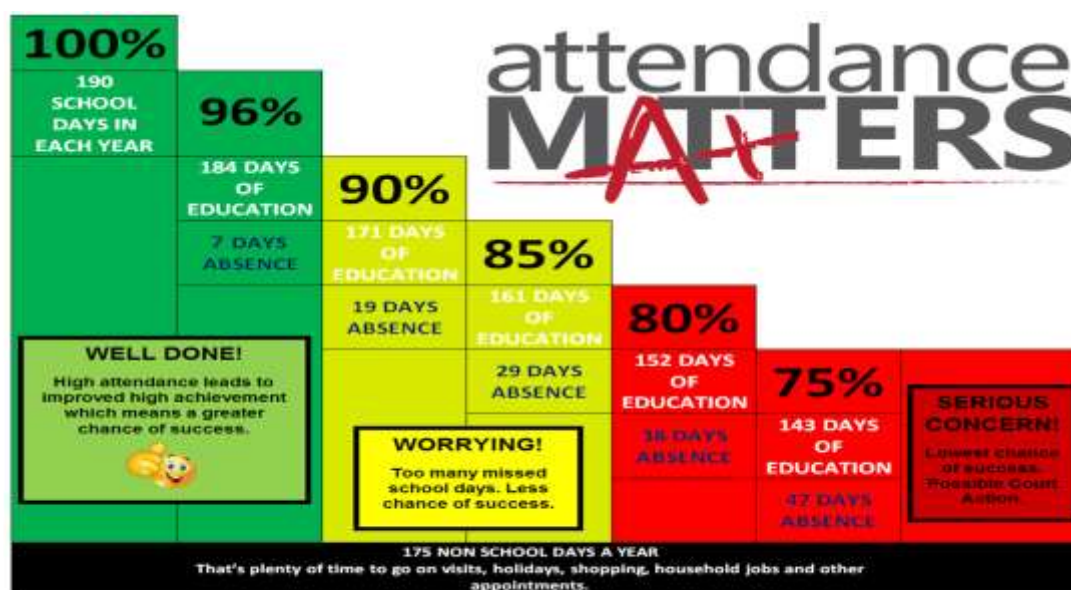
Some of the activities they have taken part in this year include attending the celebration Mass for Bishop Stephen Wright at St Chad's, leading the National Youth Sunday Mass at St Joseph's Church and organising and serving at the Senior Citizens' Christmas party.

Watch this space for more amazing community events from the Faith in Action Group!

[Mrs Harris—RE Department]



Attendance DOES matter



Evidence shows that every day of school missed can affect a pupil's chances of achieving good GCSEs, which has a lasting effect on their life chances

Attendance and punctuality

Punctuality and good attendance are essential if students are to benefit fully from their education. All students are expected to attend for more than 96% of each school year. This is the national expectation for all students, as research shows that anything less than this will mean students miss out on more than 10 days of school in an academic year and will more than likely drop a grade in their achievement each year that this happens. If a student's attendance is less than 90%, they will be classed as a 'persistent absentee' by Ofsted and the Department for Education.

Punctuality

At BGN we expect all students to arrive in school on time as lack of punctuality affects learning and behaviour not only of the pupil who is late, but it has an impact on all other learners as the teacher is required to recap on missed lesson content for those who arrive late.

Punctuality is also a key workplace skill which must be learnt at school. Employees who are regularly late to work lose their jobs. In the work place you cannot arrive at the start time, you must be in the work place prior to the start time and ready at your desk or workstation for the official start time. Students should be in form by 8.40 am **NOT** arriving through the gates at this time.



At the end of the last academic year, we held a raffle for each year group for excellent attendance. These included students who had above 96% attendance.

[Mrs Thornton—Attendance Officer]



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 require any more information, please contact our 200 Club Administrator at finance@bgn.oxon.sch.uk.

congratulations!

September's winning number is **19**

October's winning number is **180**

November's winning number is **23**

BGN sports news—simply the best, better than all the rest...

It has been a great start to the year with girls' football, boys' rugby and girls' netball. The standout teams were Yr10 netball and Yr7 rugby who were undefeated for their entire run of fixtures.

The highlight round of fixtures saw BGN pitted against our nearby rivals Wykham Park, with both girls' football, Yr7 rugby and Yr10 and Yr11 netball teams all winning convincingly. Miss Gines said her footballers were "*fantastic to watch*"; Mr Woodham compared the rugby to "*2015 All Blacks*"; while Miss O'Neill described the wins over Wykham Park as "*routine*".

Since the start of the year, we have had great attendance at our after-school clubs with rugby, netball, basketball and benchball all regularly seeing high numbers. With the football season starting soon, there have been a few open sessions which has seen over 70 students across all year groups get involved, which is fantastic news for the PE Department. Long may it continue.

The PE Department is looking forward to the next round of sports fixtures and the successes and enjoyment it will bring for students at BGN, as well as for their teachers!

Below are some photo highlights of the year so far.

[Mr Walker—PE Department]



Yr7 Boys' Rugby Team



Yr9 Girls Netball Team

BGN sports [continued]



Yr11 Girls' Netball Team



Yr10 Girls' Netball Team



Yr7 Girls' Football Team



Yr8 Girls' Football Team

Spreading Christmas cheer

The BGN Youth Choir is our name
And singing to the community is our game
Singing at care homes galore
With the crowds singing, dancing
And calling for more!

How wonderful to spread so much cheer
No other time of the year comes near
Smiles are seen on all the faces
As the choir sing in so many places.

In the supermarkets, money is collected
For the charity we have selected
In memory of Miss Smith, Cancer Research
And our finale is singing the carol service in Church.

We thank God for the wonder of this choir
As we do our best to keep the notes higher
Merry Christmas from us all to you
And blessings on you the whole year through.

[Mrs Mawn—Assistant Headteacher]



Careers education at BGN—what has been happening this term?

Sixth Form

Year 11 had their Sixth Form 'Taster day' on Friday 15 December to experience what A Levels are like at BGN. They have also been given an assembly, using materials from Oxford Brookes University on how to pick A Level courses.

Year 11

Activate Learning - Banbury, Bicester and Oxford Colleges

Year 11 had an assembly from the college explaining the different pathways they offer, including vocational courses and apprenticeships.



Upcoming open days are as follows:-

Banbury College	Wednesday 7 February	4.30-7.30 pm
City of Oxford College	Wednesday 6 March	4.30-7.30 pm

Apprenticeships

In January, Year 11 will be having an assembly from local employers on apprenticeship opportunities.

Year 10

Year 10 had an assembly from Oxford Brookes University to get them thinking about future destinations and the various pathways to university.

Work Experience

Year 10 Work Experience is taking place from 3-7 July 2024. All students will need to have found a placement and get their signed forms handed in by Friday 19 January 2024. Forms are available on the BGN website, the VLE, and in the LRC.

All Year Groups

All BGN students can access the EClips website to find out more about different careers. The details are: website: www.eclips-online.co.uk and the password is: CGFY923.

If any student would like a careers advice appointment, they should speak with Mrs Russell in the LRC, or to their form tutor.

[Mrs Harris—Careers Lead]



School Game Mark 2022/23

Blessed George Napier Catholic School has achieved the Gold Award in the School Games Mark 2022/23.

The School Games Mark is a government-led award scheme launched in 2012, facilitated by the Youth Sport Trust to reward schools for their commitment to the development of competition across their school and into the community. For more information please visit the web address given below:

<https://www.yourschoolgames.com/about/school-games-mark/>

As part of our application, we were asked to fulfil criteria in the areas of participation, competition, workforce, and clubs. This includes the numerous inter-schools fixtures the PE Department fulfil throughout the year.

There are also opportunities for our students to attend various extra-curricular clubs at lunchtime and after-school. Some are in preparation for matches including football, rugby, netball, hockey, cross country, athletics, and rounders. Students can also attend popular recreational clubs including bench ball, table tennis, badminton, volleyball, basketball and rounders.

BGN also offers development of intra-house sport. This is organised by Mrs Heywood, who is our House and Rewards Lead, and the Pupil Leadership Team.

In addition, pupils can take part in student voice regarding PE, School Sport, and Physical Activity at BGN.

Finally, our students take on roles as Leaders and Officials in both primary and secondary school events as part of our Sport Leadership programme.

A big thank you to everyone involved.



[Mr Mawn—School Sports Co-ordinator]

BGN students supporting primary school festivals

Sport Leadership

Blessed George Napier Student Leaders supported five primary school festivals during the Autumn term. The events included tag rugby, hockey, badminton, and girls' football. Four hundred children, fifty three teams and fifty-seven Student Leaders were involved.

Tag Rugby

On Thursday 12 October 194 children and twenty teams from eleven schools took part in The Banbury Area Year 5/6 Tag Rugby Festival at Banbury Rugby Club. Thirteen BGN Student Leaders were excellent at officiating games throughout the day, providing guidance to all players.

Feedback

"Lots of rugby matches and plenty of game time for the children. The young Leaders officiating were brilliant and very knowledgeable."

"Well organised, great young Leader referees. Good coaching of technique and sportsmanship."

"BGN Leaders were excellent and helpful. They were professional, encouraging and were fantastic ambassadors for their school."

Hockey

Wykham Park hosted The Banbury Area Year 5/6 In2Hockey Festival on Thursday 9 November. Nine schools took part, comprising thirteen teams and 111 children. Ten BGN Student Leaders showed excellent officiating and communication skills at the event.

Feedback

"Friendly atmosphere, well organised and opportunities for all."

"Very well organised. Referees were excellent, they played advantage where possible."

"Fair rules and decision making by young Leaders."



Badminton

On Thursday 16 November Blessed George Napier hosted The Banbury Area Year 3/4 Badminton Festival. Sixty seven children and five schools took part. The event was focused on children who may not be very engaged in physical activity. Participants rotated around ten badminton stations, guided by twenty two Year 8 Student Leaders. Well done to our Student Leaders who demonstrated a caring and positive attitude to ensure the children taking part had lots of fun and smiles on their faces throughout the morning.



BGN students [continued]

Girls' Football

Two BGN Cluster girls' football competitions took place this term. On Thursday 2 November fifty five children and eight teams from five schools took part in the Year 5/6 competition. The Year 3/4 competition took place on Thursday 23 November with thirty nine girls and five teams taking part. Our twelve BGN Student Leaders were competent officials and fantastic role models for the younger children.

Feedback

"The girls had lots of fun."

"The BGN Student Leaders were well organised and confident in explaining the games. They were also very supportive of the girls playing."

Supporting these primary school events helps our students to develop their confidence, communication skills, organisational skills and independence.

[Mr Mawn—School Sports Co-ordinator]

