



Our Lady's Catholic High School



A National Teaching School

Friday, 20 July 2018

Our Prayer theme next week is **New Beginnings**

The Summer Term comes to a close and we are able to reflect on another very successful year in the life of our school. We brought the year to a close with our annual Mass of thanksgiving which we celebrated in our Sports Hall on Wednesday morning with Father Jim Clarke as our Principal Celebrant. This was the year that featured our second whole school mission week where we explored the theme of Travelling Together in Faith. Our Section 48 Diocesan inspection took place and we were very proud to be again recognised as 'Outstanding' in both categories. We were awarded the highly prestigious Artsmark Platinum status in recognition of our outstanding work in and commitment to arts-based education. Those of you who were fortunate enough to have seen our school production of Billy Elliot will have been able to see the fruits of such work with a quite outstanding show. We also held out 30th Annual sports Day where the PE department put in an exceptional amount of effort to make what was truly a fitting and remarkable occasion, underpinned by our commitment to improving mental health among our community.



We bid a fond farewell to colleagues and offer our sincere thanks to them all for their outstanding service to our school:

- Gaby Higgins; taking a permanent position at Millfield High school
- Luke Robinson; moving to Corpus Christi as second in science
- Jenny Key; PE; moving to Corpus Christi to teach PE and Mathematics
- Chris Simcoe; moving to St Augustine's, Billington to be second in science

Three colleagues in particular deserve special mention as they have each served at our school for more than 20 years and now have decided to bring their careers in education to a close as they enter retirement. We thank them very much for their loyalty, care and commitment to our school and extend our very best wishes for a long and fulfilled retirement:

- Andrea Roberts; retiring from her position of Principal Teacher of Science
- Mike Fitzpatrick; retiring from his position of Deputy Headteacher
- Clare Crook; retiring from her position as Reprographics Technician

SCHOOL GAMES MARK

The School Games Mark is a government led awards scheme launched in 2012 to reward schools for their commitment to the development of competition across their school and into the community. The key criteria are divided into four sets of questions. They cover the following topics:

- Participation - how many young people at your school are being engaged in sporting activity?
- Competition - how many different sports are being played and how many competitions are being entered?
- Workforce - how many pupils are involved in leadership activities alongside taking part in competitions?
- Clubs - how many local links does your school have with clubs or establishments from the area?

Participating in this process allows us as a school to evaluate our PE provision and assists us in developing an action plan for future progress. On Monday, 16 July, Our Lady's Catholic High School submitted a School Games Mark application and achieved a bronze award. This is a fantastic achievement and acknowledges the commitment, determination and hard work that has taken place over this academic year.

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE CHALLENGE

Earlier this year, 70 of our Year 9 and Year 10 pupils took part in the Royal Institute of Biology's annual General Knowledge Challenge. In total, over 40,000 pupils across the UK took part in this year's challenge which is designed to stimulate students' curiosity for the natural world and encourage them to take an interest in biology outside of school.

Questions were set on the school curriculum, but the competition also rewards those students whose knowledge of the subject has been increased by reading books and magazines, watching natural history programmes, taking notice of the news media for items of biological interest, and are generally aware of our natural flora and fauna. We would like to congratulate the pupils who achieved the following awards:

Bronze Awards: Saarah Chikh, Liam Corless, Ben Gaskell, William Gregson, Matthew Helm, André Hopkins, Macy Lancaster, Arianna Lowery, Olivia Matthews, Natasha Newton, Bobby Quayle, Lily Rutherford, Beau Smith, Saffron Wadee

Silver Awards: Izzie Cunningham-Abel, Megan Newton, Nathan Walker

Gold Award: Connor Fitzgerald

MARAFIKI GARDENING NEWS UPDATE

It has been a very busy half term in the Marafiki Garden. Preparing the garden for the summer as well as various sales, a trip to Barton Grange Garden Centre and saying good bye to two key members of the gardening group, Mr Robinson and Miss Higgins. The first job was to sort the garden ready for the summer. As the garden will be unattended by pupils in the summer, pupils have been preparing the plants ready to be sold. This has included digging up the potatoes, preparing the trolley so it is presentable to sell our produce as well as re-planting produce to sell. Stalls were set up on the Thursday of the school production of Billy Elliot and in the staffroom. Thank you to all those who have contributed by buying our products. Any feedback on the products as well as things you would like to see in the future please email kse@olchs.lancs.sch.uk. As part of the hard work pupils have put in this year, Mrs Sewell and Mr Bilsborough took a group of pupils to Barton Grange Garden Centre. They were treated to lunch and a tour by a member of the Barton Grange team. Both pupils and staff learnt so much about the different plants that were offered and learnt which would be suited to grow in our garden. After much debate by the pupils they decided that Rhubarb was what we were spending our £20 Barton Grange voucher on. This will now be planted in the garden. Thank you to Barton Grange staff for looking after us and we are looking forward to a return visit in the future. The last job of the term was to say thank you and goodbye to Mr Robinson and Miss Higgins for all of their hard work. Mr Robinson was the key founder of the Marafiki group and came up with the idea for the Marafiki Garden. He has been such an inspiration to both staff and pupils. He will be greatly missed but we will keep the Marafiki theme running through our work. Thank you to you both. From the Marafiki Group.

HOLIDAYS IN TERM TIME - REMINDER

Our Attendance Policy states that any absence attached to either side of a school holiday will be assumed to be a holiday taken in term time and such absences will be classified as 'unauthorised' unless evidence is provided which proves otherwise. We ask for this evidence to be fair and consistent with all families. In addition we will expect to meet with parents whose children have taken such absences and the child will be taught separately until the meeting takes place. We will always meet with parents at the earliest possible opportunity. Should your child be ill on a day attached to a school holiday we ask that you provide evidence of this; an appointment card from a doctor or a dated and named prescription would suffice. Please contact us on a landline or briefly call in to school for us to see you. The principle is that attendance at school is a legal requirement and duty and we must do all that we reasonably can to support this. Finally, may I remind all families that any unauthorised absence for holidays or otherwise in Year 11 will result in the invitation to attend the Year 11 Prefects' Ball being withdrawn.

SUMMER BREAKFAST

For any family in need of support this Summer simply text 'FOOD' to 877877 and you will receive a message with the closest location where a free meal can be collected.

Dates to remember

Tuesday, 4 September – School opens for Year 7 only
Wednesday, 5 September – School opens for all pupils
Friday, 5 October – INSET Day – pupils at home
Friday, 19 October – School closes for half-term
Monday, 29 October – School re-opens
Friday, 21 December – School closes for Christmas