St Bernard’s High School
A Catholic Academy for Arts and Science

St Bernard of Clairvaux

Newsletter 5 - Summer Term 2017
Dear Parents,

I am delighted to write the foreword to our sixth and final edition of our newsletter for this academic year.

We live in turbulent financial and political times, and the impact on schools and the educational system in general has been well-documented in the media. I am pleased to report that staff and students have adapted well to the challenge: we continue to have expert staff, a full curriculum, exciting extra-curricular opportunities – and a gifted community of students who use these opportunities well.

There have been so many events of interest in recent weeks, and still more to come before the end of term. Our ‘RAG’ events have been very popular and raised significant sums for charity, through astute organisation by Sixth Form staff and students, and enthusiastic support from the rest of the school community. The same attributes of organisation and enthusiasm could be seen in the summer concert, the special days organised for Year 3, Year 5 and Year 6 primary school students, and also the visit to a university convention, Art department visits, the Beyond 18 days, and the Year 11 celebration day.

There are many other events and experiences to celebrate, covering many curriculum areas and year groups. I hope that you enjoy reading about them in the pages that follow.

Yours Faithfully,

Mr A Sharpe
Head Teacher

Spiritual & Moral

A STUDENT’S PRAYER

By St Thomas Aquinas

Creator of all things, true source of light and wisdom, origin of all being, graciously let a ray of your light penetrate the darkness of my understanding. Take from me the double darkness in which I have been born, an obscurity of sin and ignorance. Give me a keen understanding, a retentive memory, and the ability to grasp things correctly and fundamentally.
Grant me the talent of being exact in my explanations and the ability to express myself with thoroughness and charm. Point out the beginning, direct the progress, and help in the completion. I ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**QUOTATION FOR STUDENTS**

*By Winston Churchill*

Continuous effort, not strength or intelligence, is the key to unlocking our potential.

**GENERAL RE IN THE SIXTH FORM**

*Is Emma Watson a ‘feminist fraud’ for posing nearly topless?*

*By Bryony Driscoll, Chloe Davenport, Caitlyn Ayers & Isobel Harforth: Year 12*

The following arguments represent the groundswell of opinion in a General Re lesson which focused on gender issues.

Watson is a strong feminist who promotes equality between men and women. By participating in the now famous photograph which showed her partially topless she does not show herself to be a feminist fraud. Rather, it recognises that the human body was created by God and should be respected by everyone. Our bodies are our own and we should be able to express ourselves as we wish, our bodies are natural and Watson should not be discriminated against for the pose. Doing this makes people aware that women are confident and strong and this has a huge impact on society.

Feminism is about equality for all women and men and not about whether we pose nearly topless or not. The now famous pose should be seen as part of a feminist act as there is no stigma attached to men posing topless or baring their chests. Why then the stigma for women? Her actions support the cause of feminism.

Turn the argument on its head and ask yourself what would be the attitude if a man posed semi-nude. This is about personal choice and hypocritical attitudes. What is the difference between a painting in an art gallery and a photograph in a magazine, especially when they show the same content? It seems to me that the media provokes the argument for sheer profit. Watson’s argument is that women’s bodies do not always have to be sexualised and if a woman desires to be seen in this way then it should be accepted as her right.

**What do you think? Do you agree or disagree? Please send responses to Mr P Walls, Assistant Head Teacher, for inclusion in the next edition of the Newsletter.**
JESUS, THE GOOD SHEPHERD
By Aimee Kidney, Year 12

John 10: 1-10 records how Jesus expressed that he was ‘The Good Shepherd’ who “calls his own sheep by name” and acts to protect them from “thieves and robbers”.

Jesus explains that he will lead his flock and protect his sheep, not abandon them whenever they most need him. Here, Jesus is referring to his sacrifice for us – we are the sheep and he will always be there to protect us and make sacrifices for us, even death. This is because as sheep we are defenceless and dependent upon the shepherd. Sheep are always subject to danger and must always be under the watchful eye of the shepherd. Therefore, Jesus’ death for us is the ultimate sacrifice, and because of this, we can be sure that we will be saved.

At the moment many of us are under pressure with exams and so on. It’s easy for us to sometimes forget our main focus, and the importance of faith. It would be useful to take a few moments to reflect upon our actions recently.

It is not a case of saying feel guilty if you haven’t been perfect – no one is perfect, none of us are saints, that’s what makes us human. The important thing is that we acknowledge what we’ve done, as this shows that we are truly sorry. This is such a menial task in comparison to the huge sacrifice the Lord made. Surely, we owe it to Him to try our best to follow the Good Shepherd, even if that is simply by admitting to something we have done wrong or seeing that we haven’t put ourselves out as much as we could have.

Just take a moment to think about your actions recently: were they entirely selfish, was it just you that would benefit or did you consider others? Or, have you been selfless and done something entirely to help another person without some kind of reward or benefit?

What can we do?
The holy month of Ramadan started on Friday 26th May and Muslim students at St. Bernard’s have been fasting and not drinking whilst at school. This fasting is a special act of worship occurring annually during the month of Ramadan. For Muslims the month is a time when they are able to focus more on their spiritual development and their relationship with Allah.

This act of worship through fasting is one of the five Pillars of Islam. For Muslims this has the aim of encouraging piety and also the promise of a great reward from Allah.

Recently, we undertook and completed our Silver Duke of Edinburgh award. We travelled to various areas of Essex, with amazing views and company, experiencing our first practise expedition as a new team. This introduced us to various challenges each day involving team building and communication skills. Both our physical and mental skills were stretched and this time gave us the opportunity to experiment and reflect on the group’s strengths and weaknesses. We were now better aware of where we can improve, especially with sigh spotting and double checking bearings.

Our qualifying expedition included a 30 mile hike over four day, so packing the correct and necessary equipment was important. Throughout our walks we managed to improve our map reading and compass skills and learnt the art of ‘triple checking’. This was a hillier journey than other expeditions, so we took a small break at the top to catch our breath so we could continue efficiently.

Overall, the Duke of Edinburgh was an amazing time and definitely an experience to remember. We ended up having a very successful, record-breaking trip and loved the company (and yoga) back at camp where we could soothe our poor toes!
The Bronze DoE group went on Assessment Expedition 9 June to complete this section of their Award. Further work is needed on route planning and identifying checkpoints, but all the groups completed their walking challenge. Well done! This is my expedition diary.

**Friday** – 6.30am - alarm. Kit already packed and trailer prepared, now cool boxes ready, then straight to school for 8.00am, when students start bringing in rucksacks. Back to the day job until 12.30pm, then register students in my team before the convoy drive to Ashdown Forest. Register with Scout camp reception, direct staff and students to campsite, then a short briefing about camp, facilities and expectations. One group of staff supervise erection of student tents whilst the rest of the team erect the marquee and staff tents. One of the team makes a welcome cup of tea. Staff briefing. Students collect the rest of their kit and told to check and report any problems before dinner. 6.00pm - the cook from a local school drives out with our dinner – roast chicken with all the trimmings followed by chocolate pudding and chocolate sauce. Once eaten and cleared away each member of staff works with a team to check their routes and give safety advice. Another cup of tea arrives while other staff are making sandwiches. 9.30pm - staff round up the teams and make sure they get to bed. 10.30pm - bedtime at last! 11.00pm up again quietening excited tents so we can sleep! Alarm set for 5.30am.

**Saturday** - 4.55am – can’t ignore the whispered ‘morning’s any longer. Time to get up, check progress and preparation of the groups and reassure those with nerves. Breakfast at 6.30am, then groups start leaving the camp. Staff are already deployed to 2 car parks and on the golf course to check groups through. 8.00am – Assessors and other staff now move between checkpoints and surrounding areas, walking on or back as required. Fitbit indicates 10,000 steps already completed. 8.30am – time to start my lunch! 11.00am – update meeting with staff and comfort break! 11.30am - staff redeployed to checkpoints once more, directing and checking students’ movements. One group are spied heading across a field (not the footpath). Staff sent off at a run to head them off and redirect them back on course. Return to disused railway where staff are walking out with a student who has turned her ankle. Back to the finish to pick up 2 groups who have completed, then last groups get stopped and collected further back on the
route. 5.00pm - all groups and staff are back in camp for debrief. 6.00pm – oversee students cooking and general camp craft, staff dinner to cook, sandwiches to make and staff briefing. 7.30pm – staff brief students on routes and hazards for tomorrow. Assessors talk to their groups. Check on students with problems arising from the day. 9.30pm - check students into their tents. They are quieter today! 10.30pm - time for bed. Fitbit shows 36,000 steps.

Sunday – Alarm still set for 5.30am (wishful thinking!) 5.04am - wake up and start packing up tent. Students are getting up but a bit slower today. 6.30am - groups start departing. Staff are deployed to see them through the first sections. The rest of the site pack up tables, chairs, marquee, sweep the site for litter and hitch up trailers. 8.00am - site clear and vehicles are moved to the finish point. On the way staff are dropped off to walk on/back walk as needed. One group found on road and turned back. Three groups spotted going through their first check points or on their way to their second. One group is leaving a checkpoint card in the wrong place and is redirected. 9.00am – time for a sandwich! Two teams still somewhere on the golf course. Staff split and approach area from different points to find them. 10.30am – all groups back on track. Time to gather for an update and a comfort break. Staff deployed to walk a loop (7km) in case they missed the turn. Fitbit records 32,000 steps. 3.30pm - when last group and staff reach the finish they are loaded onto the coach and minibuses and we begin the return journey. 6.05pm – arrive, apologise for the delay, unload rucksacks and marquee is set out to dry. Trailers and minibuses are put away. Staff thanked and depart. 7.00pm - travel home via the fish and chip shop. Report safe return to school contact, eat, unpack van, shower!! 9.00am – eyes are closing. Time for bed. Check Fitbit – total for 2 days, 45km.

**HAVING A HEART – LITERALLY!**

*By Matilda Mintern, 9C*

In PE, we had a different lesson where we did a skipping circuit to help raise money for the British Heart Foundation. Before hand, we were given sponsorship forms to so that we could ask people at home to sponsor us. In the lesson, there was a wide variety of activities to do which involved skipping: skipping on your own, in pairs or even a group with one rope. We had a certain amount of time on each station before we all moved to a different one to try a new activity. Overall, it was a fun experience and it helped raise money to save lives.
SPORTS DAY RESULTS  
By PE Department

All students should be congratulated for taking part in the annual Sports Day. For those in Year 10 it will be their last at St. Bernard’s, as next year they will be heavily engaged in their GCSE examinations when Sports Day is taking place. A big thank you goes not only to the competitors but also their supporters. It was really pleasing to hear the cheers and witness the applause for all competitors, not just the stars of Track & Field but also those who kept going, tried their hardest and demonstrated fantastic resilience. There is a message here connecting to faith: we all have talents and it is up to us to nurture these, whilst also encouraging and supporting others to be the best that they can be. In doing such, we glorify God.

The winners from the different Year Groups are as follows: Year 7 (M); Year 8 (A); Year 9 and Year 10 (R).

The overall House results are: Winner (R with 623 points); Runner-Up (F with 585 points); 3rd (A with 574 points); 4th (M with 543 points) and 5th (C with 520 points).

SPORTS DAY  
The High Jump  
By Ava Sparham, 7M

We went over to the high jump, registered and got ready to compete. Everyone did a fantastic job of clearing the bar but as the height rose and the bar was knocked off I found myself the last one standing. The bar was raised higher and higher but in the end it was too high and tiredness got the better of me. I tried my best and as the last one standing I felt happy and this gave me the buzz to keep going.

To everyone who did the high jump, you all did fantastically well. Whether it was your first time jumping or not you should all be so proud. You all got your first P.B. so congratulations. If you haven’t done high jump before and you are interested then you should come to the high jump club on a Tuesday and a Thursday where we practise, get coached and receive expert tips from Mrs. Wood.
SPORTING TRIUMPH
By Mrs C. O’Shaughnessy, Head of P.E

The Borough Athletics finals were held in Basildon on 16 June. The students were wonderfully behaved and Miss McGlashon and Miss Carter did a fantastic job organising the competitors. We did particularly well in the relays, St Bernard’s coming 3rd. Overall, the team finished 4th and the competitors were a credit to the school and themselves.

Following the event selection has taken place for the Essex County School Championships on 6 July at Melbourne Park, Chelmsford. I am pleased to acknowledge the particular achievements of two Year 7 students who have been selected to represent Southend in these Championships: Ava Sparham (High Jump) and Grace Holmes (1500m). Well done to both!

EXCELLENCE IN SPORTS
By Madison Jeffrey, 7R

On 17th May I attended a yoga and meditation class with the Excellence in Sports Group. It was a great opportunity to have an experienced instructor open our minds and learn about the potential benefits of such disciplines. The whole point about opening the mind is to block any problems going on in our lives. Following this we discovered different yoga positions: the tree, warrior, flying dragon and my favourite, the lion. We finished off by meditating and opening our minds again. In a world where we can all too easily become distracted it is a great way to relax. This can really help before a competition and I can see how this can calm nerves before-hand. I will be putting the experience and learning to good use.
The annual celebration of the Jack Petchey Achievement Awards for the Borough of Southend-on-Sea took place at the Palace Theatre on Wednesday 17th May, 2017. The event was a real celebration of the talents, skills, resilience and fortitude of young people in the locality. All the winners of the Jack Petchey Award at the school over the last year came together to be recognised, all being presented with a gold medallion. As always, it was a wonderful evening listening to all the stories about the amazing young people who do so much good within the community. This year my wife and I were joined by Ms Connelly and Mrs Maltby. By the end of the evening we had sore hands from all the clapping, but it was worth it.

There were a number of musical and dance performances from different contributors to the night. They were all fantastic but our own Rock Band stole the show. They exuded confidence and looked every inch the rock stars of the future, made more obvious with that rebellious jump with guitars in hand at the final musical note.
The Rock Band consists of Sarah-Jane Walter (vocals), Autumn Davis (bass), Jimmy Foy (guitar), Jamie Ahmed (guitar) and Amisu Oluwasegun (drums).

I would like to thank Autumn Davis for all her help organising the Band members, the Premises staff for driving them to the venue with their kit, Mr Davis (Autumn’s dad) for taking the equipment back to the school at the end of the performance and Ms Connelly and Mrs Maltby for sharing a wonderful evening of entertainment and good news. A big thank you should also go to Mr Tim Fletcher, the maestro who runs the Rock Band.
PARENTS’ & CARERS’ CONSULTATION
By Mr P. Walls, Assistant Head Teacher

Recently, parents and carers were asked for their opinions about the school in our annual survey. As a school, we always welcome such feedback and use it to evaluate what we do so we can offer the best possible experience for the young people at St. Bernard’s. Thank you to all those who took the time to respond to the questionnaire. Very positive responses were evident, as can be seen from the table below which shows opinion across all Key Stages. The figures show the percentage who concur with the given statement after taking away those who do not.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My daughter/son is happy at this school</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My daughter/son feels safe at this school</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My daughter/son makes good progress at this school</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My daughter/son is well looked after at this school</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My daughter/son is taught well at this school</td>
<td>94</td>
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<tr>
<td>My daughter/son receives appropriate homework for their age</td>
<td>92</td>
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<tr>
<td>This school makes sure its students are well behaved</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This school deals effectively with bullying</td>
<td>96</td>
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<tr>
<td>The school is well led and managed</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This school responds well to any concerns I raise</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I receive valuable information from the school about my daughter’s/son’s progress</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would recommend this school to another parent</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
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HOME FIRE SAFETY ADVICE
By Essex Fire Service

The six most common causes of fire in the home are: cooking (including electrical appliances), electrical items, matches, candles, smoking and overloading sockets. There are leaflets on Home Fire Safety at Reception on the turn-style. The advice covers smoke alarms, escape plans, bedtime routines and what to do in the event of a fire. There is also advice on first aid for burns. Please feel free to take a leaflet.

SACRED HEART SCHOOL SUMMER FAIR

The Sacred Heart School Summer Fair is taking place on Friday 7th July, 3.30pm to 6.30pm. There will be bouncy castles, a BBQ, a bottle tombola, go carts and a café. All are welcome.

Entrance via the school gates in Windermere Road.
JUNIOR MATHS CHALLENGE

Pupils at St Bernard’s achieved a bumper crop of 1 gold, 8 silvers and 13 bronzes in this year’s UKMT Junior Maths Challenge. Over 250,000 pupils from across the UK sat the Junior Maths Challenge with roughly the top 6% receiving a gold certificate, the next 13% silver and the next 21% bronze.

Bronze certificate winners: Sararah Thakoordin, Catherine James, Millie Batt, Abigail Page, Nikola Liwora, Mollie O’Mahony, Norah Jumbo, Darcey Gilbert, Ewoenam Tetteh, Ifeoluwa Olawande, Chloe Mpofu, Eden Jenkinson, Tilly Dobson and Imogen Moone.


Gold certificate winner: Marnie Horncastle.

Sample questions from this year’s Junior Maths Challenge (answers on the website www.ukmt.org.uk)

Which of the following calculations gives the largest answer?

A 2-1       B 2÷1       C 2×1       D 1×2       E 2+1

Last year, at the school where Gill teaches Mathematics, 315 out of 600 pupils were girls. This year, the number of pupils in the school has increased to 640. The proportion of girls is the same as it was last year. How many girls are there at the school this year?

A 339       B 338       C 337       D 336       E 335

LIVE HEALTHILY EVER AFTER

Year 7 & 8 students have the opportunity to join a FREE MoreLife Holiday Club in Southend. This is being run by Deborah Hart at Southend Local Authority. To book your free place contact Deborah on 10702-212838 or by email: deborahhart@southend.gov.uk
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friday 30 June</td>
<td>All Day</td>
<td>Year 10 MFL Trip to Cambridge</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday 3 – Friday 14 July</td>
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<td>Year 10 Work Experience</td>
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<td>Monday 3 July</td>
<td>All Day</td>
<td>Gold DofE Pre-Expedition Training for Years 11 and 12</td>
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<td>Monday 3 July</td>
<td>All Day</td>
<td>Beyond 18 Day</td>
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<td>Tuesday 4 July</td>
<td>All Day</td>
<td>Year 9 Immunisations</td>
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<td>Thursday 6 July</td>
<td>All Day</td>
<td>Beyond 18 Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday 11 July</td>
<td>9.00am–2.30pm</td>
<td>Year 10 Students to University of Essex, Southend Campus</td>
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<td>Wednesday 12 July</td>
<td>6.00pm–9.00pm</td>
<td>Year 5 Open Evening– School closes at 2.00pm</td>
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<td>Thursday 13 July</td>
<td>All Day</td>
<td>Inset Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday 14 July</td>
<td>All Day</td>
<td>Year 9 German Trip to V&amp;A Museum</td>
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<td>Monday 17 July</td>
<td>All Day</td>
<td>Year 10 Textiles Trip to V&amp;A Museum</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday 18 July</td>
<td>All Day</td>
<td>School Celebration Event</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday 18- Friday 28 July</td>
<td>7.30am–5.00pm</td>
<td>Gold DofE Training, Practice &amp; Assessment, Yorkshire Dales &amp; Lake District</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday 19 July</td>
<td>2.00pm–5.00pm</td>
<td>Year 10 Drama Students to see ‘Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time’ at Cliffs Pavilion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday 21 July</td>
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<td>School closes at 12.30pm for Summer Break</td>
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<td>Monday 24- Friday 28 July</td>
<td>9.00am–3.30pm</td>
<td>Summer School</td>
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