

# Keynotes

November to December 2023



## Dear Parents and Carers

As we draw near to the end of this term at St Peter's, I sense the warmth and gratitude for the vibrant spirit that fills our school community. The holiday season is upon us and it brings with it a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the values that make this time of year truly special.

Christmas, at its core, is a celebration of love, compassion, and togetherness. It is a time to appreciate the bonds of family, the joy of friendship and the gift of giving. As we prepare to break for the holidays, I want to take a moment to express my sincere wishes to each and every one of you.

In the midst of the festivities, let us not forget the true meaning of Christmas - the birth of Jesus Christ, a symbol of hope and salvation.

As a Catholic secondary school, we are guided by the teachings of love and kindness, values that resonate deeply during this season.

This academic year started very well with some outstanding exam results at both GCSE and A Level and a record number of students joining our Sixth Form. The outcomes for your children both academically and pastorally continue to be high, due to an exceptional team at school and great support from home.

In November we enjoyed the return, after a four year pause, of our PTA Christmas Fair.

It was an afternoon of festive fun, fundraising with amazing raffle prizes, wonderful performances from our choirs and musicians and lots of Christmas goodies to purchase. The PTA do a terrific job and if you have just a few hours a year to spare and wish to join them, please get in touch via: [pta@st-peters.surrey.sch.uk](mailto:pta@st-peters.surrey.sch.uk).

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to our dedicated teachers, staff and students for their hard

work and commitment throughout the term.

Together, we have already achieved a great deal, and I am proud of the sense of community that defines our school.

As you gather with loved ones, may the spirit of Christmas fill your hearts with joy. Let us embrace the opportunity to share kindness and goodwill with those around us and may the actions echo throughout the coming year.

Wishing you all a happy and holy Christmas filled with love, laughter, and cherished

moments. May the New Year bring continued success and happiness to our St Peter's family.



Mr T Miller, Headteacher



## Christmas Carol Concert

On Wednesday 29th and Thursday 30th November, our sold-out annual Christmas Concert took place in St Cecilia's Theatre. It was a lovely festive occasion with over 100 students taking part from all year groups.

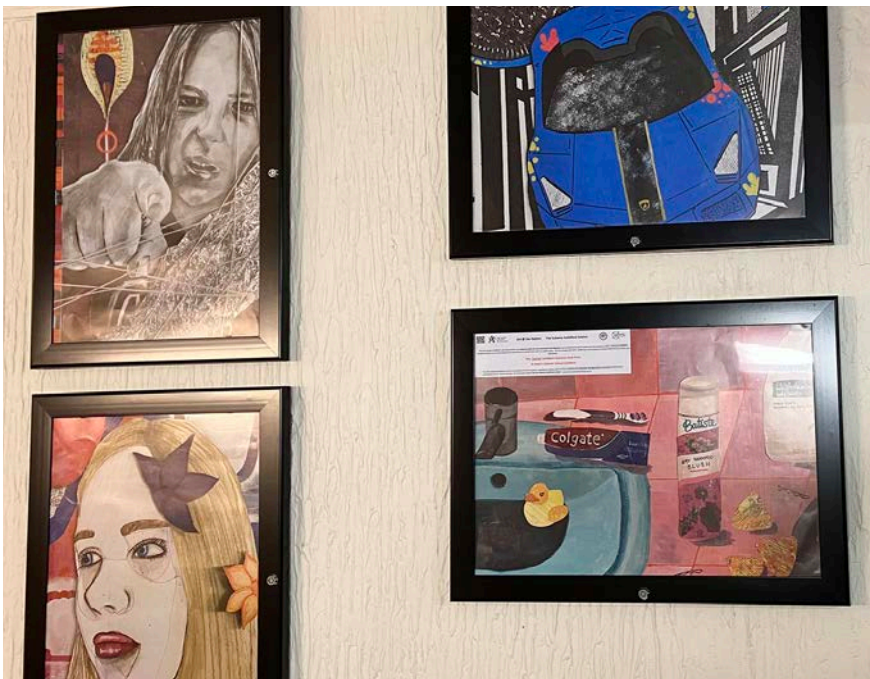
Items included performances from our Orchestra, String Orchestra, Musical Theatre Chorus and Band, Jazz Band, Folk Band, Marimba Club, Girls' Choir, Boys' Choir, Senior Choir, Acapella Choir,

Enrichment, Guitars and Ukles as well as a solo performance from Jeannie in Year 10.

The music ranged from Billie Eilish to Mozart with some Christmassy favourites too. There was also some impressive singing from our audience to conclude both halves of the concert – thank you to our parents, families, and staff! We are SO proud of everyone who took part. Bring on the Spring Concert!

## Mental Health Parent Information Event

Please remember to add this event to your diaries - Thursday 11th January 2024 at 6:30pm in St Cecilia's.



## Guildford Train Station Art Display

We are delighted to once again be asked by Art @ the Station to exhibit work from St Peter's. Art @ the Station is a local organisation that looks to local schools and colleges to help decorate the walls of some mainline

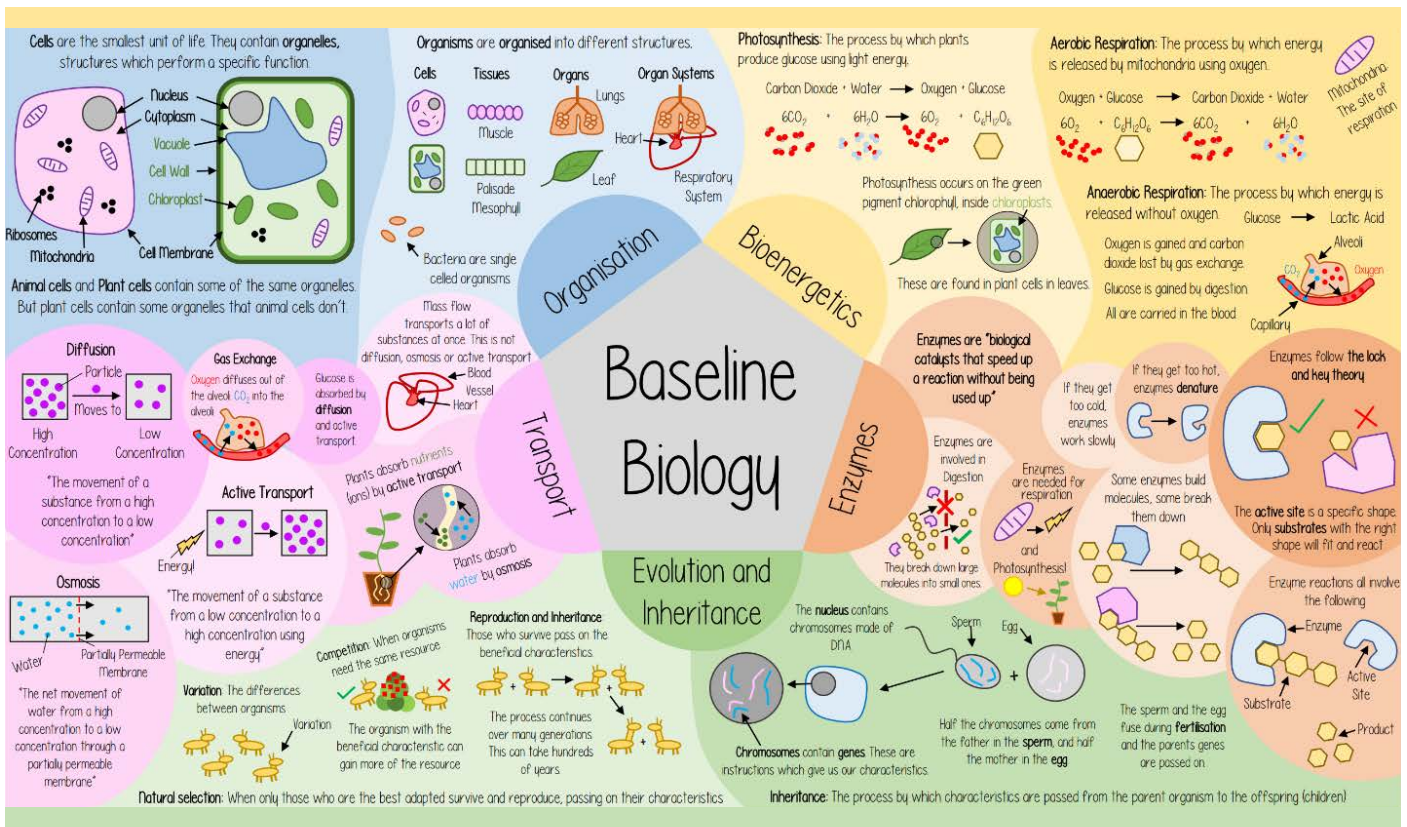
stations. This is the second year we have taken part. Work can currently be seen in the underpass within Guildford station close to the entrance of platform 5.



## PTA Christmas Fair

A huge thank you to everyone who supported the Christmas Fair last month which raised £5740.74 for the school. As you can see from the pictures, it was a huge success and the PTA is planning to continue the tradition and hold another fair next year!





## The Wonderful World of Science

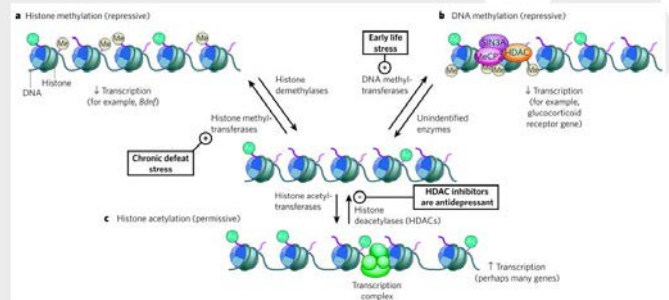
Science helps us to answer our biggest questions and to meet our most basic needs: from explaining the deepest mysteries of the universe to the structure of elementary particles that form atoms. Science drives innovation, creating new knowledge to help us solve current and future problems. What an exciting and enormous subject.

The intention of Years 7 to 9 is to instil a solid foundation of science, upon which we can build more complex GCSE knowledge. This begins with following mastery learning and creating bespoke schemes of learning in accordance with the mastery grid. We are now developing this into a summary of baseline knowledge for each subject which encapsulates the key ideas in their simplest form. Biology has been piloting this with 'Baseline Biology', which will soon be joined by Chemistry and Physics.

The Science Department is in the process of transforming the way that practical procedures and investigations are completed by students. We record staff performing the activity and create pictorial

## Genetics and Epigenetics

- Highly polygenic form of inheritance
- Neuronal growth regulator 1
- Dopamine D2 receptor
- CELF4
- DNA methylation: neuronal circuitry formation, projection, functioning, & plasticity.
- Hypermethylation of the histone deacetylase 4 gene



methods so that students can follow a method more easily and ultimately they can have more success, more independence and the cognitive capacity to consider the scientific principles they are witnessing. It has been a great success!

The transformation in students' understanding through seven years of science is phenomenal. Recently students in Year 13 were asked to research a neurological disease of their choice and present for 7-20 minutes to their peers.

The presentations were the best ever and included a description of the biochemical mechanisms of depression (by Gabriella and Kar-Kay) and an in depth explanation of Guillain-Barré Syndrome (by Kirsten and Andrea).

Finally, Mr Paterson-Spir has been supporting a group of Year 12 and 13 students to design rockets using a very detailed software package. This extracurricular activity is led by ex-student Fintan (currently at University of Sheffield) and lift off is scheduled for June.

**Pictorial Method – Rhubarb and Surface Area**

**14-15**

**Area =  $\pi r^2$**

- 1 Collect a measuring cylinder, scalpel, file, liner, ruler, beaker and rhubarb stalk from the valley. What and show your teacher.
- 2 Put on your goggles.
- 3 Use the ruler measure and scalpel to cut three 20cm lengths of rhubarb on the white tile.
- 4 Use the ruler measure and scalpel to cut two 10cm lengths and 4 1cm lengths.
- 5 Cut two of the 10cm lengths in half. You should now have one 20cm length, two 10cm lengths and four 0.5cm lengths.
- 6 Take your ruler and measure the diameter of the cut face of the 20cm length of rhubarb.
- 7 Use the measurement to calculate the surface area of one cut face. Add the total surface area to the results table by multiplying the area of one face by the number of faces for each test.
- 8 Take your beakers and measuring cylinder to the potassium permanganate. Measure 300cm<sup>3</sup> into each of these beakers.
- 9 Take the beakers back to your desk.
- 10 Add the four 0.5cm lengths of rhubarb to one of the beakers and start the timer.
- 11 Give the beaker a small swirl for 2 seconds.
- 12 Give the potassium permanganate a clear and colourless stop the timer.
- 13 Record your time in the results table.
- 14 Repeat Steps 11-14 with the two 10cm lengths in one beaker, then the one 20cm length in the other.
- 15 Swap results with two other groups and calculate a mean.



## A Midsummer Night's Dream

In dreary November, our talented Drama students brought balmy summer back into St Peter's with our school production, A Midsummer Night's Dream.

An energetic and riotous production of Shakespeare's comedy was performed by a large cast and crew in St Cecilia's Theatre, with Victoria as an imperious, imposing King Oberon and Tiana shining as his estranged fairy Queen Titania. Oberon's mischievous sidekick Puck was played by Year 7 student Francesca who brought real energy and spirit to the impish role.

Alistair led the mechanicals as an entertaining and hilarious Nick Bottom, with Natasha playing his long-suffering director with many eye rolls. They were supported by

Faustine, Nicolette, Freyia and Mya as a comic crew who brought the house down with their play-within-a-play at the end of the show.

The lovers, played by Ben, Oscar, Sharon and Maisie brought moments of pathos and tenderness but also moments of great audience hilarity as they grappled with everyone being in love with the wrong person. Maisie had stepped in to play Hermia last



minute and learned all the lines and direction in ten days, yet gave a pitch perfect performance, full of sweetness and humour.

Many more students played smaller and choral roles with absolute focus, with choruses of good and bad fairies and curious courtiers, a less-than-besotted Theseus and Hippolyta adding comic touches, and an opinionated Egeus adding some maternal strife.

An active and involved cast of trees and plants made the enchanted forest come alive, leading the lovers astray and reacting to all the merry madness unfolding in the forest. The magical atmosphere was intensified by music played by a dedicated band of onstage musicians, who had composed some of the music themselves and also played a song composed by one of our trainee teachers.

As usual our brilliant backstage team made inventive props, ensured that set changes ran smoothly and ran the lighting and sound desks independently.

Seeing our audiences responding so well with laughter and smiles was a great reward for all the hard work involved, and we are so proud of our cast and crew for this fantastic and magical production.  
**Mrs Hulland, Mrs Holland and Mrs Allam**



# Literacy Roundup

As parents, we understand the profound impact that cultivating a love of reading can have on our teenagers. In a world filled with distractions, encouraging a passion for books not only enhances their academic success but also fosters creativity, empathy and a lifelong love of learning. In this newsletter, we share some tips on how you can create a reading-friendly environment at home and inspire your teenager to embrace the magic of books.

**1. Lead by Example:** Children often model their behaviour after the adults in their lives. If your teenager sees you enjoying a good book, they are more likely to be curious about reading themselves. Set aside dedicated time for reading and let your teenager witness your enthusiasm for different genres. Share your own reading experiences and discuss the books you love.

**2. Create a Cosy Reading Nook:** Designate a comfortable space in your home specifically for reading. It does not have to be extravagant; a cosy corner with a comfortable chair or a pile of cushions can make a world of difference. Ensure there is good lighting and keep the area

clutter-free. A welcoming reading nook can make reading a more appealing and enjoyable activity for your teenager.

**3. Build a Diverse Library:** Variety is the spice of life and the same goes for reading. Ensure that your home is filled with a diverse range of books that cater to your teenager's interests and reading level. Include a mix of fiction and non-fiction, classics and contemporary works, and explore different cultures and perspectives. A well-rounded library provides ample opportunities for discovery.

**4. Schedule Family Reading Time:** Set aside regular family reading time where everyone in the household dedicates a specific period to reading independently. This shared experience not only promotes a love of reading but also strengthens family bonds. Consider discussing the books you are reading during these sessions, fostering an environment where literature becomes a topic of conversation.

**5. Incorporate Technology:** In today's digital age, technology can be a valuable ally in promoting reading. Explore audiobooks, e-books and

interactive reading apps. These tools can engage tech-savvy teenagers and make the reading experience more dynamic. Just be sure to balance screen time with traditional books to maintain a healthy reading routine.

**6. Join or Start a Book Club:** Encourage your teenager to join a book club or, better yet, start one with their friends. Sharing thoughts and ideas about a book with peers can make reading a social and enjoyable activity. It also provides a sense of accountability, motivating them to finish books and participate in discussions.

**7. Celebrate Milestones:** Acknowledge and celebrate reading milestones, whether it is finishing a challenging book, reaching a certain number of pages or exploring a new genre. Positive reinforcement can create a sense of accomplishment and boost your teenager's confidence in their reading abilities.

Remember, the goal is not only to improve literacy but to instil a genuine love of reading. By incorporating these tips into your daily routine, you will be fostering an environment where books are not just a requirement but a source of joy and inspiration for your teenager.

**Happy reading!**



## Year 7 in 2023

As the school gates swung open on a very hot day at the start of the academic year, a wave of fresh faces flooded the hallways – our vibrant Year 7 cohort. The transition from primary to secondary school can be a daunting one, but our newest students embraced the challenge with enthusiasm, turning the corridors into hubs of energy and excitement.

The first day was a mix of nerves and anticipation. The playground buzzed with animated chatter as friendships formed and old bonds strengthened. From the moment they stepped through the doors, it was clear that this group of students brought a contagious energy that infused life into every corner of our school and real willingness to be a part of our St Peter's community.

Navigating their way through a new environment, Year 7 have quickly adapted to the rhythm of secondary school life. The timetable, lockers and multiple classrooms have become familiar territory, and with each passing day, their confidence grows. The transition is not only about acclimatising to a new physical space but also about developing a sense of independence and responsibility, which they have done brilliantly!

Beyond the academic curriculum, Year 7 have wasted no time in getting involved in extracurricular activities. From sports to music, drama to languages, our newest additions have embraced the opportunity to explore their interests and talents. It is heartening to witness the emergence of them as a well-rounded and dynamic group of students.

There have been many moments for the students to build upon their sense of belonging here, with their tutor group reflection days being just one, where they were given the space to build a sense of community and to fully understand what it is to be a student at St Peter's. Another occasion that was enjoyable to witness was when they attended the Year 7 disco, it was fantastic to see them grasp the opportunity to socialise with their peers.

The year group have already left an indelible mark on our school community, promising a year filled with achievements, camaraderie and memorable experiences.



7KO



7TE



7RO



7BA



7FR



7JP



7ST

# School Trips...



## Sixth Form Languages Trip to Paris

From the 2nd-5th November, the Year 12 and 13 French students, alongside Mr Hulland and Mrs Isaacs, went to Paris. We started the day very early in the morning (4.30 am... but it was worth it!) and we were on the Eurostar by 8am.

Arriving in Paris, we dropped our bags off at the hotel and headed straight out again to the Conciergerie, a fascinating museum detailing the gruesome French Revolution. We had an early dinner at a delicious pizza place in Saint Michel, with some very atmospheric French music which several of us enjoyed singing along to! Next, we headed to the cinema to watch a film, called "Le Règne Animal", an interesting film, to say the least!

The next day, we got up early and enjoyed a guided tour of the Opéra Garnier, with its beautiful architecture and haunting stories of the Phantom of the Opera. After some free time, we visited the Fragonard perfume museum and most of us ended up buying some perfume! We finished the evening off with a stunning boat trip. A double rainbow appeared as the sun was beginning to set, and despite the light rain, it was definitely a highlight of the trip!

The next morning, we all went to the Musée d'Orsay, a plethora of art, with some of the most famous including Monet and Vincent van Gogh! After strolling around, interpreting the artwork, and re-enacting some of them too, we later saw the spectacular monument of the Arc de Triomphe! A bit later, we went to an unusual, unique tourist attraction - a sewers tour - the only one in the world! From the dark, damp albeit interesting sewers tour to the iconic one and only Eiffel Tower, which caused quite the excitement as it started twinkling, with a glorious view



of Paris, all lit up!

On Sunday, we sadly packed our bags and dropped them off to the Gare du Nord, as we still had a bit of time left, so set off to Sacré Coeur. There we got a glimpse of a French Mass taking place and of course, stopped at the statue of Saint-Pierre (Saint Peter). We particularly enjoyed the Metro, where it used a questioning tone before confirming the name of the station, which all made us laugh. Nation?... Nation! So, to sum up, it was quite the experience and we honestly did not want to leave, so with heavy hearts, we said 'au revoir Paris!'

**Gabby and Ellie, Year 12**

# School Trips...

## London Fashion and Textiles Trip

The Year 13 Fashion and Textiles class travelled to London to buy fabric for their final project and to see the fashion exhibition in the Design Museum, which is funded by Alexander McQueen - one of the designers they study.

The trip started in Shepherd's Bush, London, where we walked from the overground station towards the market. On each side of the road, everywhere you looked, there were fabric stores upon fabric stores. The first store we went into was a modern inspired textile and fabric store, with neat and organised shelves of fabric, fastening and trims. This store is where most of the students bought their fabric for their final pieces. We then went to other 'small business' style fabric stores which had bundles of fabric rolls stacked everywhere. Although it was hard to squish between



stacks of fabric and dig through, the experience was amazing, allowing the students to find 'hidden gems'.

Fabrics in hand, we set off for the 20 minute walk to the Design Museum near Kensington through a park, with green scenery and plenty of photo

opportunities! Once we got to the museum, we were filled with awe at the architectural design inside, vast stone walls gave an aesthetic modern approach to the building. From the entrance you could see the vast gallery, which was free to the public with its spectacular views. The moving shutter saying 'user, maker' was the highlight from the view.

The last portion of the trip was spent in the fashion exhibition. The designs showcased gave great inspiration for the students to incorporate into their designs as well as their NEA project coursework. It was an incredible immersive experience and is definitely one to remember, with amazing vintage pieces, immersive listening experiences, impeccable visual experiences, etc.

**Mya 13KO**



## Theatre Trip

On Thursday 9th November, some of Year 10 were lucky enough to see Matilda the musical at London's West End. I already knew the story having read the book and watched the movie, so I was really excited to see the live performance.

We travelled from school by coach and were treated to some of London's Christmas lights on the short walk to the theatre. The show was absolutely



amazing. The singing and dancing were spectacular, particularly the characters Matilda and Mrs Phelps. My favourite parts were the impressive stunts they performed on stage especially when the terrifying Miss Trunchbull swings one of the girls by her pigtails and throws her across the playground!

Overall, it was an amazing experience which I really enjoyed. The show is perfect for any age and I would definitely recommend going to see it if you get the chance.

**Anna 10TE**



# School Trips...

## History Trip

On Friday 24th November, the History GCSE students went to visit the Tower of London and Imperial War Museum. We learnt about important historical places such as where Anne Boleyn was executed, the White Tower, St John's Chapel and weapons and armoury too. The highlight of the Tower of London was seeing the Crown Jewels as this included orbs and sceptres from St Edward's reign to Queen Elizabeth's crown.

In the Imperial War Museum, it was exciting to see planes hanging above your head and tanks on display. We explored the World War I gallery which was extremely interesting as you can have an immersive experience in the trenches and look at items that give you an insight to how war was experienced from many different perspectives.

Overall, both the Imperial War Museum and the Tower of London were amazing as they helped us to learn more about war and conflict whilst relating it to our topic of crime and punishment as Guy Fawkes was tortured. This was definitely an awesome trip!

By Sammy 10ST



## English Language A Level Trip

On 5th December, the Year 12 and Year 13 English Language classes visited London on a trip to see the British Museum, Dr Johnson's House and the Tate Modern. It was a brilliant day full of learning

and being exposed to Britain's history and culture. The highlight was visiting Dr Johnson's House, as Dr Johnson made huge contributions to the English Language as a lexicographer. We were able to dress up in period clothing and see some of his original work and manuscripts, which was amazing!



## Student Success Outside the Classroom

Hello, my name is Ellana and I am a Year 11 student. I am a Latin and Ballroom dancer and have been dancing for six years, and two years competitively. I dance at ANDANCE which has given me confidence and a huge amount of encouragement.

Earlier this year in March I qualified to compete in Blackpool's Winter Gardens Empress Ballroom in the Nationwide Medallists competition. Latin and Ballroom dancing is categorised into



three levels for exams: bronze, silver and gold, and I am currently silver for both.

I also dance within the IDTA (International Dance Teachers Association) who hold many events and organise each competition and the qualifications to compete at Blackpool. I also dance with my partner Jake who has partnered me in every competition.

I started to dance as a weekend hobby when I was 10 years old, unaware of the opportunities and doors it could open for me. Dance is now my passion and I hope to carry it on for the rest of my life. I love the atmospheric energy at every competition, the lights and the beautiful costumes. I have learnt that dance is not something that takes a short period of time to learn but something that requires perfection and perseverance. Although I feel like I have been doing it forever, there is still so much more to learn!

I have also been fortunate enough to have 1-1 dance lessons with the former Strictly star Flavia Cacace (and past St Peter's student!) which was incredible and very enjoyable.



In the future, I hope to compete in open competitions which essentially means without restrictions, this to me is purely where the heart of dancing is. With open competition, I am able to compete all around the country and possibly globally as well. I would do this with a partner which also means that we can dance outside the syllabus and become more creative in our routines, through this you are able to become known within the dance industry.



### Louis 13FR and Colm 12RO

Huge congratulations to Louis and Colm who were absolute superstars at the Guildford Cross Country Championships. Colm came second and Louis took third place and have both been selected to represent Guildford at the Surrey School Championships. Well done!

### Daniel 9ST

Congratulations to Daniel who is building upon his speed skating experience and representing Great Britain in the Hanse Cup. In October, he qualified in all the finals for his category and took silver in the 500m and 777m distances. He ranked third overall in this competition.

In November, Daniel represented Great



Britain again in the Star Class C-D which was held in Oberstdorf, Germany. Qualifying in all the A Finals for his category, Daniel took bronze in the 777m distance, and broke two British records in his category - one in 777m which was standing for seven years and 1000m which had not been broken for five years. Daniel ranked third overall out of 31 competitors in this competition.

# PE News...



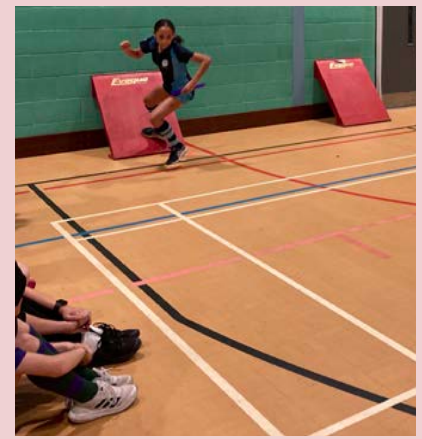
## Cross Country

On 16th November, students from all years competed at Charterhouse School in the Guildford Cross Country Championship. All students raced brilliantly with a number of students being chosen to represent Guildford district at the Surrey School's Cross Country Championships. Congratulations to all involved!



## Sportshall Athletics

Sportshall Athletics - they came fifth overall for all schools in Guildford and Waverley districts! The Year 10 boys also got to the fifth round of the national cup which is the furthest a St Peter's school team has attained in a number of years!



## Basketball

Two Year 10 girls' basketball teams went to George Abbot for a tournament and we won second and third places. Both teams showed great sportsmanship and effort.

## Netball

The Year 7 netball team went to Guildford County and participated in a tournament. They showed great effort and sportsmanship throughout each game. They finished the tournament winning two out of their three games.

## Rugby

The Sixth Form boys' rugby team played against George Abbot and we narrowly lost 24-15 despite scoring some fantastic tries!

*The*  
GASKIN'S  
FREE CHRISTMAS LUNCH  
CHRISTMAS DAY MONDAY 25TH  
DECEMBER 2023

DELIVERY WITHIN A 10 MILE RADIUS OF GUILDFORD ON  
CHRISTMAS DAY FOR OVER 500.

Last year we cooked an amazing 567 meals for people from all walks of life last year. We would like to thank all the helpers and sponsors because this would not happen if it was not for you.

**Free Christmas Lunch  
for those in Need**

The wonderful Gaskin family, who is part of the St Peter's community, is offering to deliver a free Christmas lunch to people in need. For more information

please go to [www.freechristmaslunch.com](http://www.freechristmaslunch.com) and if you are able to, please feel free to donate.

Merry

Christmas

