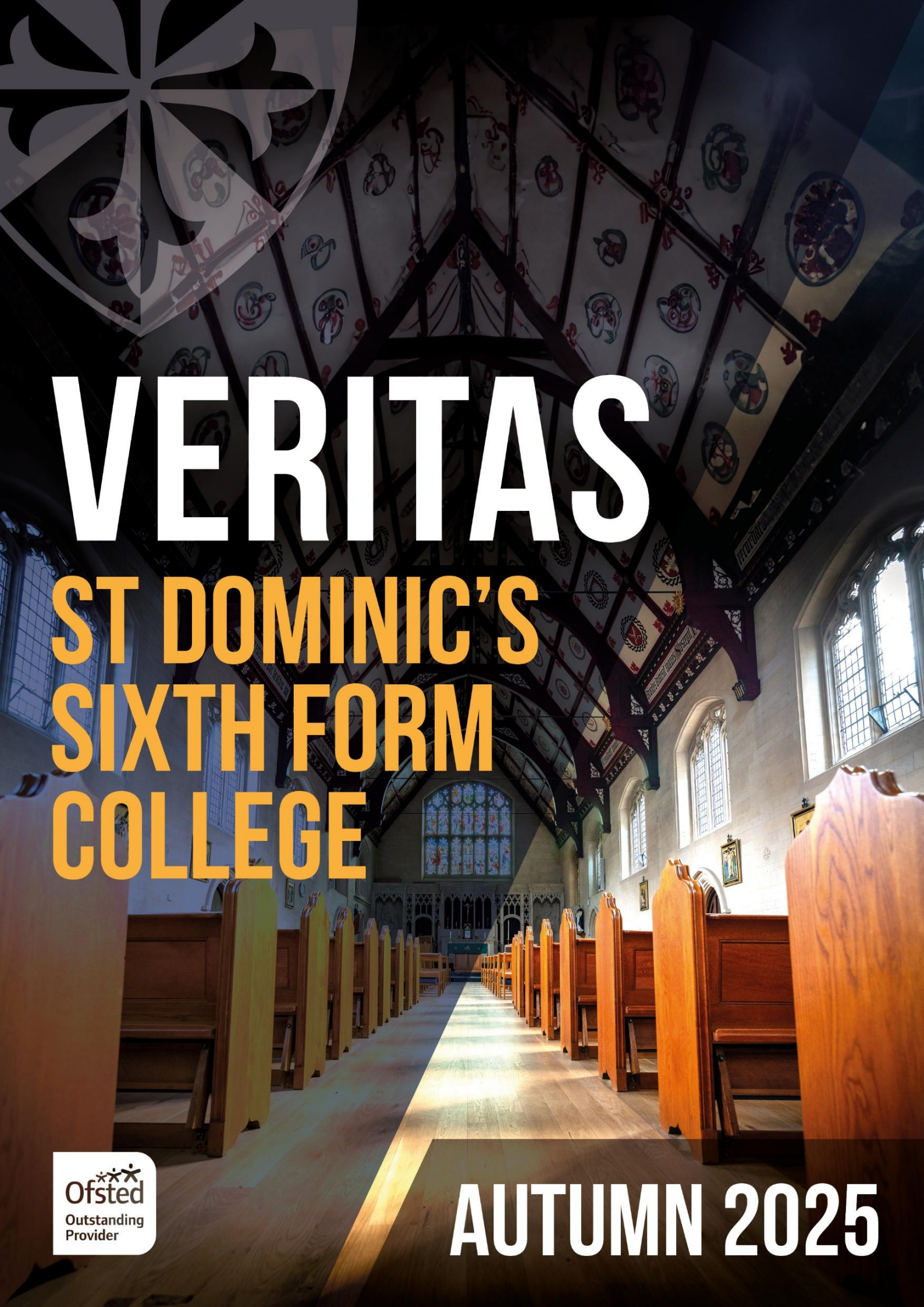




VERITAS

ST DOMINIC'S SIXTH FORM COLLEGE



AUTUMN 2025

EDITORIAL FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Principal, Andrew Parkin, looks back over 2025, one of the most successful years in the history of the College.

Without doubt, 2025 has been one of the most successful of any in the 46-year history of St. Dominic's. This edition of Veritas highlights the wealth of events and activities that have taken place this term – it has been a fantastic four months. However, as 2025 comes to a close, I wanted to look back over the last twelve months to remind everyone of just some of the 'stand-out' moments of this year.

Against almost every metric, we have improved, grown or outshone local and national competition resulting in us, once again, being one of the best performing and most over-subscribed institutions in Greater London and the Home Counties. It continues to be a tremendous privilege to lead this College and I remain proud of all that we achieve day by day, month by month and year by year. Choosing specific events, month by month wasn't easy – there have been so many but here are my highlights, month by month, starting back in January.

January

The College had just reopened on Monday January 6th when the Ofsted call came through at 9.01am, informing us that a team would visit us the following week, from January 14th to 17th. It was a sharp awakening to the new year and new term but the College was ready and embraced the process with fulsome enthusiasm. It was to be an inspection conducted under the revised framework of September 2022 which included the Skills Agenda and, for the first time, the inspection team would include a designated HMI whose primary function was to link with employers, civic leaders and HE institutions in order to verify the work that we do across each of those areas.

It was just over 30 months since our last inspection in May 2022 but this one seemed a fuller experience given that it was over four days and the entire student body was present, unlike in the last one. The inspectors duly arrived and engaged in their work looking at a wide variety of subjects through the 'deep dive model' which included our largest subject, Maths. They met with students, parents, governors and 'skills' related stakeholders. There were many special moments throughout the four days and it was a pleasure to take the Lead HMI, Ramin Narimani, out on the gate at the end of day one so he could see the calibre of our students and provide him with the opportunity to talk to a good number of them as they headed home. This set the tone for the rest of the week. Everyone stepped up, supported and helped the whole community through the four days and overall it was a fair and balanced process. All inspectors were forensic, insightful but very open to hearing our story and understanding St. Dominic's.



Andrew Parkin • Principal



EDITORIAL FROM THE PRINCIPAL

The final outcome was really pleasing overall, 'outstanding' in all areas including the top judgement for skills which is 'strong'. This was a tremendous achievement by all concerned and there was universal praise for our students who were a real credit to the College during the four day process. And to note, this inspection means St. Dominic's has been judged to be 'outstanding' for over 25 years which is a remarkable achievement.

February

The Jazz and Rock Café is a biennial event, alternating with the College Musical and this event in February was the biggest to date with over 25 acts performing to a packed audience. It was a showcase concert of such fantastic musical talent demonstrated by so many of our students, the majority of whom were not studying A level music (unfortunately!). The audience thoroughly enjoyed the night and a particular highlight was hearing Qaiz Rodrigues sing 'Killing me softly', who at the time was a Year 2 student, went on to achieve A*A*A* in Maths, Physics and Further Maths and is now employed as a specialist teaching assistant across the Science and Maths departments.

March

Our annual 'International Women's Day week long series of talks and presentations' is always a highlight of the College year and was particularly so this March as we welcomed over 30 women from a wide variety of academic, professional and personal backgrounds to speak to our students. The week opened with Uma Kumaran, MP for Stratford and Bow and former student of St. Dominic's reflecting on her time at the College and how her career has unfolded over the last 25 years, bringing her to her current role as Member of Parliament for Stratford and Bow. She was very warmly received by a packed Chapel and it set the tone for what was an excellent week. Over the next five days we were inspired and enthralled by women in the fields of physics, oceanography, cosmology, medicine, civil engineering, religious life, banking, education, sport and fitness, sustainability, journalism and the arts to name but a few. Our final guest was Baroness Rosa Monckton who shared her story and the impact of three women in her life, which included Diana, Princess of Wales. Again, speaking to a packed Chapel, you could hear a pin drop when she spoke very personally about her friend, the Princess of Wales and the tremendous impact Diana's death has had upon the rest of her life. It was tremendously real and personal and was a high point of the week. We concluded with a splendid lunch for all the female staff and other invited guests which brought a very special week to a close.

April

Our Lenten Liturgy this April provided the whole College community with the opportunity to hear and learn about the Easter Triduum and the importance these three days have to Catholics and Christians around the world. This year our Chaplain and Chaplaincy Group presented 'The Way of the Cross' and the journey that Jesus took in his final hours on earth before being crucified. The service was moving and the prayers carefully written and it was very powerful seeing our altar servers process into the Siena Hall and place Our Lord on the Cross in front of over 700 students gathered there.



EDITORIAL FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Also in April it was a privilege to represent the College at the funeral of Pope Francis, who had passed away on Easter Monday, along with Ben, Zoya, George and Keira (immediate past Head Boy/Girl and present Head Boy/Girl). We gathered at 5.30am on the edge of St. Peter's Square along with hundreds of thousands of others and were present throughout the entire service which was led by Cardinal Re, Dean of the College of Cardinals. There were many moving moments throughout the three hour solemn Requiem Mass but I think the one moment I will remember forever was the final commendation when he gently incensed and blessed the coffin with holy water and then stood at the head of the casket in silent prayer. At that precise moment the entirety of the square was utterly silent and it felt like the Lord was among us. An event all of us present will remember for the rest of our lives.

May

We say farewell to our Year 2 students in the first week of May, just ahead of the commencement of their final examinations. The outgoing Year 2 were a hard working and dedicated group of young men and women who genuinely cared about their own academic successes as well as the College in its entirety. The Leavers' Liturgy and Awards Ceremony was fun and a delight and all that were present really enjoyed the occasion. It was followed by a very enjoyable BBQ in the College grounds organised by our fantastic Catering Team, in glorious sunshine and most of the staff commented on what a really fantastic event it was this year.

The rest of May is very much examination focused and from the 12th onwards the Year 2 students were involved in the demands and pressures of their final papers. The Examination Team, under the leadership of Susan O'Brien and Amanda Wardlaw manage the process very well and the College had a 100% attendance to all papers once again this year which is another impressive statistic.

June

The mid-point of the year is always a really lovely month. The Year 1 students have returned following their UPEs and are focusing on the next part of their academic programme and it is the time in the calendar when we are able to welcome our partner schools to the College for various activities which, this year, included retreats and classes in maths and science subjects. Pupils from St. Anselm's, St. George's and St. Teresa's were with us at various points during the month of June and had a fantastic time in classes organized by our two largest departments. The Retreats were also very successful and the Headteacher feedback wholly positive and we will offer this opportunity to St. Bernadette's, St. Joseph's and St. John Fisher next June. We also welcomed the Year 10 pupils from The Sacred Heart Language College for their Taster Day which was also very successful.

EDITORIAL FROM THE PRINCIPAL

July

We held our first ever 'St. Dom's in Bloom and Open House' event on July 1st and welcomed over 200 visitors to the College for a tour, a cup of tea and a piece of cake! Our students were guides and ambassadors and gave the visitors a comprehensive tour of the site including the pond and bee hives that are at the bottom end of the site. It was a really special occasion, concluding with an auction of plants and flowers and the judging of the various entries in the 'best in' categories. This again, was another showcase event and brought our College into the local community. Some of the visitors live opposite us and had never been across the front gate so it was lovely to welcome them.

Our Mass of Thanksgiving this year was celebrated by Mgr. Martin Hayes who enjoys being with us at St. Dominic's. We took the opportunity whilst Mgr. Martin was with us to ask him to bless our new mini-bus and to welcome one of our students as an extraordinary Minister of the Eucharist.

Before we closed for the academic year we had our annual Teaching and Learning conference and Quality Day where we reflect on the year past and plan for the year to come. We were very pleased with both events and the training on our Quality Day provided by Martin Griffin co-author of the book, The A level Mindset (VESPA), was excellent and set the tone for the new academic year.

The academic year closed in a blaze of sunshine, we said farewell to colleagues who were moving onto pastures new and we all looked ahead to a relaxing summer holiday.

August

A level and BTEC results were published on August 13th and we welcomed back to College a large number of students to collect their envelopes containing their examination results. The results were some of the best we have had at St. Dominic's for a number of years for both BTEC and A level. Here is a reminder of the 2025 outcomes, with the lower figure being the national outcome percentages:

A*	A*/A	A*/B	A*/E
12	36	67	99.7
9	28	53	97.5

Once again, we exceeded the national averages significantly and did so in the vast majority of all subjects taught at the College.



EDITORIAL FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Results day was a superb celebration with so many of our students achieving 'in line with' or 'exceeding' expectation. Progression to university this year was 91% with 7% going on to degree apprenticeships and 2% of the cohort have taken a gap year to reapply or retake a particular course. We were immensely proud of these results and they have set the tone for this academic year for both year groups.

September

The new academic year gets under way in September with a flurry of activity which includes enrolment, induction and the commencement of the College timetable. Each year, enrolment gets better and better and this year we welcomed over 800 students in effectively one full day and a couple of hours on day two! This is a tremendous achievement by the whole staff team. The timetable starts on the Wednesday of the first week in September and we get going with the subject induction processes. Our numbers settled towards the end of the month and we grew by 60 students overall on last year which was good news overall.

The two Parent Information Evenings and Reception in the middle of the month are important markers at the commencement of the academic year for the parents of both year groups. This year, over the course of the two days, we welcomed over a thousand parents to one of these events. These evenings are really important for us in order to 'set the tone' around expectations and to outline the differences between school and college life.

Through the Core RE and the Tutorial Programmes, we explain to our students the centrality and importance of Catholic Social Teaching at the College and we have a number of charity events in September that bring this to life. Our first big 'fundraiser' is the walk around 'The Hill' raising monies for 'Mary's Meals' which this year started in glorious sunshine and concluded some 40 minutes later in an absolute monsoon. We were however positive, if drenched, and raised just under £5000 for this global charity. Later in the month the students, through the Executive and the Charities Group, raised £1200 through a Bake Sale for Macmillan Nurses, supporting their annual Coffee Morning. Both were great events and were important introductions for our Year 1 students.



EDITORIAL FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Our Core RE offer is a central part of our curriculum and this too gets underway in September. The programme follows the curriculum directory as compiled by the Catholic Church and all our students receive the required amount of teaching. Year 1 enjoy a stand-alone lesson and Year 2 have a weekly lecture. The lessons are taught by Helena Shaw, Clare Castell and Ebony Beck and cover a broad number of topics but which are rooted in Catholic teaching. The programme is comprehensive and well received by the students. At some point this academic year we will have a Section 48 inspection which will look in detail at our Core RE offer and the work that the students produce.

October

The launch of VESPA continued throughout October with all Year 1 students receiving individual lessons around Vision, Effort, Systems, Practice and Attitude. I taught on this programme and it was very positive overall and helped the Year 1 students to have a far better understanding of just how different A levels are compared to GCSEs. This initiative will continue throughout this academic year and we will review and amend as we learn and take feedback from our student body.

We welcomed Bishop Jim Curry to celebrate our 'Mass of Welcome' at the start of the month. Bishop Jim is one of our newer auxiliary Bishops in the Diocese and had previously been parish priest of Our Lady of Victories in Kensington. In his homily he reminded us all of our collective responsibility to nurture the talents that God has given us and how St. Dominic's is a place where 'dreams do come true' but only if we open our hearts and minds to the Lord, allowing him to guide us along the right path. Bishop Jim joined us for refreshments afterwards and enjoyed being with us, once again, at the College.

Our annual Open Day is the second Saturday of the month and this year we welcomed over 5000 visitors throughout the day. This is our one marketing event of the year, other than a couple of smaller open mornings in late November and it is always a fantastic event. Our guests were effusive in their praise of the College in totality and that is always very rewarding to hear. We are now in the application process with the deadline being early January.



EDITORIAL FROM THE PRINCIPAL

November

We returned in early November to mark the month of the Holy Souls and Remembrance. Our poppy garden in front of the statue of Our Lady is a very beautiful and poignant reminder of lives lost in the Great War and, as always, we marked the two-minute national silence on the 11th day of the 11th month at the 11th hour. Our annual Remembrance Concert took place on the 13th with a performance of the Schubert Mass in G which was excellent.

As the month draws on and the days shorten, the mood of the College shifts as we all prepare for the Mock Examinations. All the study spaces were full and the students took the revision process very seriously as the examinations approached which is always encouraging to see.

So that brings us to December, and I am writing this just ahead of the final four days of this long and very busy term and at the end of this super year for St. Dominic's. I can report that the Mock Examinations have gone well, the papers are all marked and graded (amazing achievement by the staff) and the results will be published to students and parents before the recess. Interviews took place on December 12th for the new Head Girl, Head Boy and Executive Team. Over a hundred applied, twelve were taken forward to interview and eight have been appointed and you can see details of the new team inside this edition. I want to acknowledge the tremendous work of Keira O'Malley and George Procter the outgoing Head Girl and Boy. They have been great advocates and ambassadors of our College and have been excellent to work alongside.

There are so many more moments that I could have shared from the past year but that would have made for an even longer editorial! Well done, to you the reader, if you have arrived at this final paragraph! I want to thank all my staff for their hard work and dedication this year, all our students who are inspiring to lead, the outgoing Student Executive for their leadership and enthusiasm for the College, our parents who support us from home, our Governing Body for their ongoing commitment and high levels of engagement and all those who are supporters of our College across a wide range of establishments, locally, nationally and internationally. Finally to say thank you to my Senior Leadership Team for their hard work this year and for all they do to support myself, our staff team and the student body.

So all that remains now is for me to wish you a very happy, peaceful and holy Christmas.

Andrew Parkin
Principal

STUDENT EXECUTIVE 2026



Introducing our new Student Executive for 2026

(l to r) - Anjaylia Yau (Executive Member), Zoe Gyamfi (Executive Member), Fatima Gulamhusein: (Deputy Head Girl), Grace Sheehan (Head Girl), Nicholas Charitou (Head Boy), Cyprian Mbogo (Deputy Head Boy), Jaeden Gandhi (Executive Member) and Daksh Patel (Executive Member).

LIFE AS A FIRST YEAR STUDENT

Coming from an all-boys private school in Central London to St. Dominic's has undoubtedly been a monumental shift in my education. This change, at first, was unsurprisingly very daunting - a complete change of environment exacerbated by having almost no-one attend from my previous school. This made the transition seem all the more difficult but as soon as I started my first day, all my expectations were quickly proved wrong.

What I saw on that day was the beginnings of a community (one that was filled with hundreds of people in exactly the same situation) looking for a fresh start with new friends, opportunities and experiences which, without a doubt, contributed greatly to the welcoming, energetic and highly optimistic atmosphere that had been present within these first few weeks.

St. Dominic's has provided me with an undeniably potent sense of independence and opportunity - not only for academic success, but also for a chance to obtain a breadth of experiences not normally obtainable from most Sixth Forms or Colleges.

Another key aspect that also sets St. Dominic's apart from my experiences in my previous school is the fact that this sense of community is not limited to just the pupils but also extends to the teachers as well.

The expectation of a teacher that I used to have was that of almost complete polarity, by thinking of their roles as being solely that of either teaching or reprimanding with no room for exceptions. However, at this College the teachers feel much closer to friends than anything else. In my experience they take time to remember each person in their class and make an effort to connect and engage with everyone. Treating us as individuals rather than simply a class which needs to be taught.

Although it is not as simple as a stark dichotomy between St. Dominic's being great and other schools being terrible, I truly find that I have found a new home at this College, one that I will cherish for the years to come.

Samuel Stein - Year 1



LIFE AS A FIRST YEAR STUDENT

As a first-year student, my start at St. Dominic's has been both academically enriching and personally fulfilling. I settled in surprisingly quickly, supported by a welcoming environment and a community that genuinely encourages one another to succeed. I have formed many new friendships and continue to meet new people every day, which I have so enjoyed and has really helped me feel fully integrated into College life. There is an amazing breadth of opportunities across all subjects, allowing me to stretch myself and deepen my academic interests, whether through wider reading, workshops, or the chance to discuss ideas beyond the curriculum in debates.

Beyond the classroom, the College has offered many valuable communities, and I have particularly enjoyed taking part in the Charity Team during the candy cane sales and Macmillan bake sale, as well as performing the Schubert Mass in G, with the choir and now preparing for the Christmas concert! These experiences have helped me feel not just involved but genuinely connected to the College's ethos of participation and ambition.

Overall, it has been an exciting start and I am looking forward to getting involved in even more opportunities and experiences as the year continues.

Grace Sheehan – Year 1



MEET OUR NEW COLLEAGUES: SARAH, MATTHEW AND VANESSA

I am delighted to have joined St. Dominic's this term as a Personal Tutor. I have always enjoyed working with Sixth Form students, as it is a period of significant academic progress and personal growth where guidance can have a real impact on their confidence and direction.

It has been wonderful to see our students settle in so confidently, and I am enjoying getting to know the personalities and aspirations of both our first and second-year students. I look forward to supporting them throughout their time here as they navigate the opportunities and challenges of this key stage in their education.



Sarah Palmer – Personal Tutor



I worked in a large school in central Newcastle for 3 years before joining St. Dominic's, where I always liked teaching A-level. Settling in here has been a smooth transition thanks to the efforts of brilliant colleagues. Having a job that I am excited to do every day, and enjoying the time I am spending at work, has made moving to London so manageable. Everyone has been so supportive and welcoming, and the department is fantastic. It is wonderful to have so many highly motivated students too, and everything at St. Dominic's comes together to create an amazing atmosphere around the College. A place is only as good as the people in it and the people at St. Dominic's are incredible.

Matthew Eggleston - Teacher of Physics

MEET OUR NEW COLLEAGUES: SARAH, MATTHEW AND VANESSA

I joined St. Dominic's Sixth Form College this autumn, bringing with me 20 years of experience working in education. When my previous school closed, it felt like the natural step to explore a new opportunity working in this field.

I now work in Student Services, where I am really enjoying getting to know the students and supporting them day to day. Having spent most of my career working with prep school children, the shift to working with 16–18-year-olds has been a refreshing and rewarding change. Walking along Harrow-on-the-Hill High Street brings back memories of being a twenty-year-old working in an estate agent and then at Harrow School.

Since arriving, I have been struck by the amazing facilities on offer and the friendliness of all the staff, which has made my transition especially smooth. The lovely grounds, the chapel on site, and the strong sense of faith that runs through the College create a truly special environment and the students are extremely lucky to have all of this available to them.

Dani and Annette have helped me feel at home from day one and I am especially looking forward to completing my first term and first Christmas at St. Dominic's.



Vanessa Mahon
Student Services Assistant



ECONOMICS

WALKING TOUR OF LONDON

A small group of second year Economics students recently took part in a walking tour of the City of London, starting and ending at Moorgate Underground Station. The tour offered students a brief introduction to one of the world's leading financial centres, as well as enhancing student understanding of financial and economic history and urban change. It also provided an opportunity to illustrate the practical application of key theories discussed in class. The route took students through streets affected by the Great Fire of London, wartime bombing and (more recently) urban regeneration. Along the way, students considered the changing function of the City, as it developed from a Roman settlement to today's global financial hub, noting how the City has been repeatedly reimagined and rebuilt over the centuries.

Students viewed the Guildhall, Mansion House, and the Lloyds insurance building. They saw the past and present headquarters of national and international banks and insurers. They revisited their understanding of markets through the discussion of the origins of street names – for example, Poultry, Milk Street, and Honey Lane. They discussed the importance of comprehensive and accurate data in minimising asymmetry in market data while viewing the exterior of the Bloomberg building. Students then moved on to visit the Bank of England Museum, where they explored the development of Britain's financial system and examined how the Bank has adapted over more than 300 years. Exhibits on inflation, interest rates, and the role of the Bank in times of crisis linked directly to topics covered in lessons. How to successfully crack open a Bank of England safe has not been discussed in lessons, which might go some way to explaining why only two of our students managed to do so successfully.



Students outside the Bank of England



Bethany and Ilayda at the scene of the crime!

ECONOMICS

WALKING TOUR OF LONDON

In the area around the Bank, the group observed the architectural contrast between historic buildings - such as the Royal Exchange - and the modern skyscrapers that are growing in numbers throughout the financial district. Students discussed what draws global capital, banks, and insurance companies here, the career opportunities that they offer and how the UK economy benefits from - and perhaps depends upon - financial services exports.

The tour concluded with a visit to *The Lookout* at Broadgate, a public viewing platform located on the 50th floor of a City skyscraper. From here, students reflected on how the City - and London beyond - offer businesses economies of agglomeration, where financial institutions, legal firms, insurance companies, and tech start-ups cluster to share infrastructure, human talent, and services. Students are aware that this allows firms to benefit from increased productivity, innovation, and job creation, but perhaps at the expense of rising costs (for example rents, but also everyday purchases such as Black Sheep coffee) and social inequality.

Returning to Moorgate Station, students were invited to consider the high-skill, high-wage nature of employment in the City. Students were keen to learn more about what skills are in demand and how the City is responding to technological change, remote working, and increased global competition. They concluded that the day provided them with helpful real-world application and context for their Economics studies, while encouraging critical thinking about their future careers and the role of the City in the wider UK economy.

Anthony Duffy - Teacher of Economics



Picture (looking left to right) – the Bank of England, with St Paul's Cathedral in the background, taken from the 50th floor of a City skyscraper.

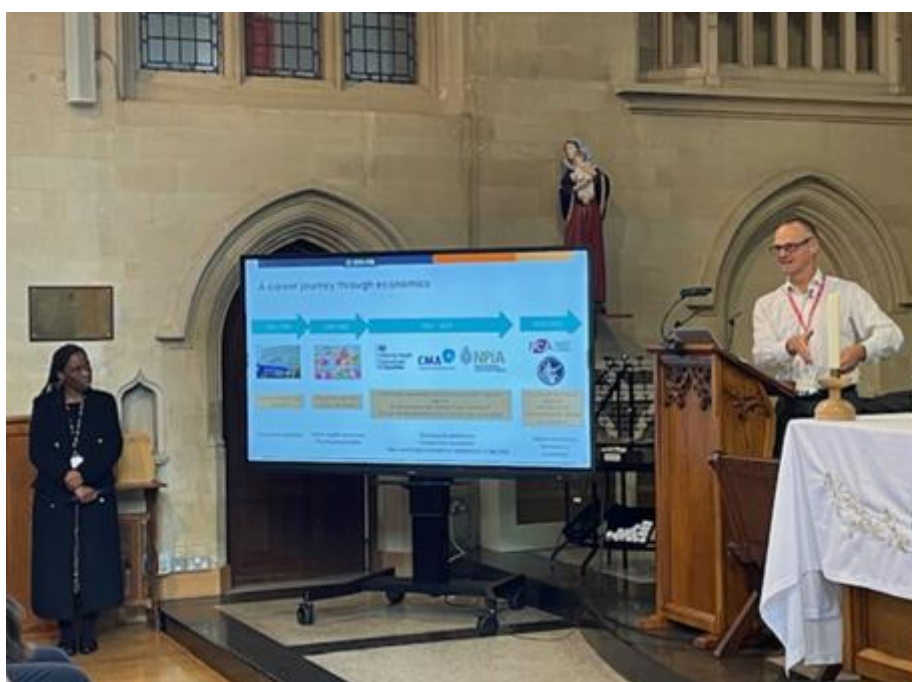
ECONOMICS

BANK OF ENGLAND

In a 60-minute presentation delivered on Wednesday, 8th October 2025 to students in the St. Dominic's College Chapel, Andy Beale, a representative of the Bank of England, gave an engaging and enjoyable overview of the Bank's role in the UK economy, explaining how its decisions impact everyday life, most notably the Tesco Meal Deal!

The talk began with a brief history of the Bank, highlighting its founding in 1694 and evolution into the UK's central bank. Andy then outlined the Bank's primary responsibilities: maintaining monetary and financial stability, setting interest rates, issuing banknotes, and supervising banks to ensure a safe and sound financial system.

A key focus of the talk was monetary policy and how the Bank uses Bank Rate - the UK's base interest rate - as a tool to control inflation. The speaker explained the Bank's 2 per cent inflation target and described how adjusting interest rates can either encourage or discourage spending and borrowing. Real-world examples were used to illustrate how inflation, interest rates, and the labour market are interconnected, and to explore the impact on the UK of key global events such as the 2008 financial crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic and recent energy price shocks.



ECONOMICS

BANK OF ENGLAND

The presentation also explored how the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meets every six weeks to discuss and set the interest rate. Students were given an insider's insight into the decision-making process and the types of economic data the MPC analyses, such as GDP growth, unemployment, and global market trends. Of particular interest was Andy's observation that the interest rate setting process is much more qualitatively focussed (and thus less statistically focussed) than an outsider might expect.

Towards the end of his talk, Andy discussed career opportunities at the Bank. He profiled his own career journey, in the NHS, consultancy, and public policy. He then highlighted key routes the Bank offers young applicants and encouraged students to consider roles in economics, finance, data analysis, and public policy. He emphasised that a background as an economist, whilst helpful, was not a requirement, before describing the wide range of internship, apprenticeship, and graduate opportunities that the Bank makes available.

The session concluded with a Q&A, where students asked insightful questions about Quantitative Easing, salary levels in the City and the personal attributes required for a successful City career.

St. Dominic's Sixth Form College is very grateful to Andy, and to the Bank of England, for the time and effort given in support of our students.

Anthony Duffy - Teacher of Economics



CHAPLAINCY MARY'S MEALS



Our fundraising efforts began this year with our annual Mary's Meals Sponsored Walk. The mission of Mary's Meals is to provide one daily meal to children in their place of education. Our College is partnered with Katiye School in Zambia, with over 290 pupils attending each day and receiving a meal provided by Mary's Meals. Despite the light rain, our students walked with determination and joy, raising over £4,000. Thank you to everyone who donated to this important cause.



UPDATES FROM THE CHAPLAINCY AND CHARITY TEAMS

Chaplaincy Team

This term we welcomed a new Chaplaincy Team of twenty students. They have been very busy supporting the prayer life of the College and attending and helping at all the charity events. We also welcomed four new servers and many new readers, students who have generously responded to the call to ministry at the altar and in the proclamation of the Word. Their willingness to step forward is a sign of faith alive and growing in our community.

Charity Team

The Charity Team, part of the Wednesday enrichment programme, has been particularly active this term. They have supported Macmillan, Wear It Pink for Cancer Research, and the Meet and Mingle events which help our new students build friendships. They also assisted with the CAFOD Family Fast Day, playing a key role in the simple soup lunch offered in support of CAFOD. Their work is an inspiring expression of Catholic Social Teaching in action.



UPDATES FROM THE CHAPLAINCY TEAM

Macmillan Bake Sale – September 2025

On Friday, 26th September, students and staff at St. Dominic's came together to support Macmillan's Coffee Morning and Bake Sale. Many students came dressed in green in support of Macmillan, joined by the charity team in their green attire and SLT in their aprons!

From blueberry muffins to lemon slices, and one beautifully piped cake that was so tempting our Principal Andrew could not resist a slice!

Thanks to everyone's generosity (and love of cake), the College community raised over £1,400! A fantastic achievement. The money raised will go directly to Macmillan Cancer Support, a charity that provides a wide range of support and services to people living with cancer. A huge well done and thank you to everyone who donated, baked, or simply enjoyed a sweet treat in support of the cause.

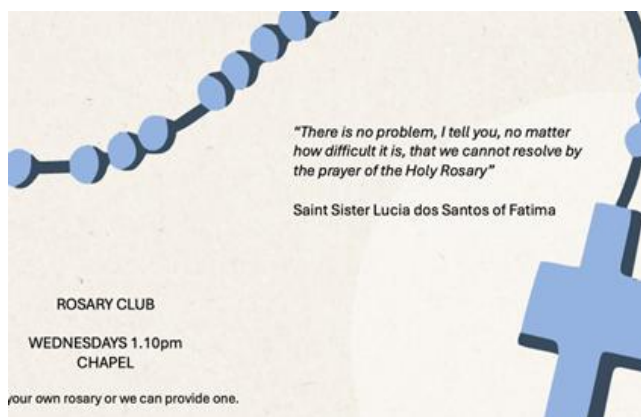
Arya Patel - Year 1 Student



UPDATES FROM THE CHAPLAINCY TEAM

Rosary Club

This year we have seen the beginning of a Rosary Club, which now takes place every Wednesday in the Chapel at 1.10pm. The initiative began after a request from Kiran Govan, a first-year student, who now leads on this each week. 'There is no problem, I tell you, no matter how difficult it is, that we cannot resolve by the prayer of the Holy Rosary' – Sister Lúcia dos Santos.



Lectio Divina Group at St. Dominic's

This term saw the launch of our new *Lectio Divina* group at St. Dominic's, an initiative introduced after students asked for more opportunities to deepen their spiritual lives. The group meets on Thursdays after College, offering a peaceful close to the day.

Lectio Divina, meaning "sacred reading," is an ancient way of praying with Scripture. Rather than studying the text in an academic way, students are invited to read slowly, reflect, listen, and allow a particular word or phrase from the Gospel to speak to them. It is simple, unhurried, and quietly transformative.

Our warm thanks to Audrey Hamilton who came to St. Dominic's to lead these prayerful sessions, for sharing her time, wisdom, and gentle guidance with our community.

UPDATES FROM THE CHAPLAINCY TEAM

CAFOD – Family Fast Day

For CAFOD Family Fast Day, a simple lunch of homemade vegetable soup was served in the canteen, raising £70 for CAFOD. A huge thank you goes to Bala and the catering team for preparing the soup and making the day possible. Many staff and students commented on how delicious it was, and it was a wonderful way of standing in solidarity with those in need while enjoying food made with care.



Sacrament of Reconciliation

We are very grateful to Fr Agustin, who generously made himself available to hear confessions and offer God's mercy through this sacrament before Mass on the 3rd October. It was a moving reminder of the openness of our students to God's grace, and of the importance of creating space for them to encounter Christ's healing love.



UPDATES FROM THE CHAPLAINCY TEAM

Welcome Mass – Care for Creation – October 2025

On Monday, 6th October we were delighted to welcome students, parents, staff, governors, and our Dominican Sisters to the Welcome Mass, the opening Mass of the new academic year. The Mass was celebrated by Bishop James Curry, who led us in a beautiful and inspiring act of worship centred on the theme of *Care for Creation*.

In his moving homily, Bishop James reminded us of our shared responsibility to care for our common home, Mother Earth. He spoke of our students as the hope for the future, encouraging us all to live good and faithful lives so that we may help make the world a better place. He reflected, too, on those most affected by the challenges of our time, the poor, the disadvantaged, and especially women and children, who so often bear the heaviest burdens of both climate change and ongoing conflicts around the world. His words invited us to respond with compassion, courage, and a renewed sense of purpose.

We are truly fortunate at St. Dominic's to be surrounded by beautiful gardens and the richness of nature. As part of our celebration, we created harvest boxes filled with the fruits of our allotments, including an enormous marrow and several butternut squashes grown by Dominic Kelly, who takes care of our grounds. These offerings were a joyful reminder of the abundance of God's creation and of our duty to nurture and protect it.

We would like to extend our thanks to all who participated, our readers and servers, and especially our choir led by Abigail, for giving their time and talents to make this celebration such a fitting and faith-filled start to the year.



UPDATE FROM THE CHAPLAINCY TEAM



Our “Wear It Pink” day for Cancer Research, run by our wonderful Charity Team, brought a burst of colour and plenty of good-spirited fun to St. Dominic’s. Students and staff arrived dressed in every shade of pink. Under the shack, the atmosphere was lively with games, pink-themed nail painting, and temporary tattoos adding to the festive feel.

Most importantly, it was all in support of a great cause. Thanks to everyone’s generosity, over **£200** was raised on the day to help fund vital cancer research. A fantastic effort from the whole community!



UPDATE FROM THE CHAPLAINCY TEAM

Remembrance Day

This year's Remembrance Day observance in the chapel was marked by quiet dignity and genuine reflection. In the days leading up to the service, students and staff supported the Poppy Appeal, helping to raise funds by selling poppies throughout the College for the Royal British Legion. Staff and students gathered to honour those who served, observing the two-minute silence across the College at 11am.

During the service our Head Girl Keira and Head Boy George stepped forward to lead the prayers. Their words were thoughtful and sincere, offering a balance of remembrance and hope. Looking back with respect and gratitude, and forward with the steady belief that peace is something we must continue to work for.

The chapel felt full, not just with people, but with the shared sense of purpose that Remembrance Day brings each year. A simple service, held in the way it has always been, yet meaningful in a way that feels renewed every time.



UPDATE FROM THE CHAPLAINCY TEAM

Candy Cane Fundraiser for Lourdes

In the run-up to Christmas, St. Dominic's students brought plenty of festive spirit to the College with this year's Candy Cane Sale. Students purchased candy canes and attached their own handwritten notes, some sweet, some funny, all filled with good cheer. These were then delivered during tutorials at the end of November and into early December, spreading a little burst of seasonal kindness around the College.

All funds raised will support St. Dominic's students who will be serving as Redcaps on the Westminster Pilgrimage to Lourdes in the summer of 2026. Their hard work now helps make their service in Lourdes possible later, and the whole community has backed the effort with real enthusiasm. Over £400 was raised.



Foodbank Appeal

This year's annual Foodbank Appeal for Harrow Foodbank and Newman Catholic College received great support from the St. Dominic's community. Students and staff contributed a wide range of items, helping to provide practical assistance to those who may be finding things difficult this Christmas. The steady flow of donations across the College showed a clear commitment to helping others in a simple, meaningful way.

Thank you to everyone who took part, your contributions will make a real difference.

ADVENT: BLESSING OF THE CRIB

Fr Jeremy Fairhead joined us on Friday, 28 November, to celebrate Mass and to bless the crib that stands just outside the College grounds. After the blessing, we returned to the chapel, where the community gathered singing *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*. The familiar hymn filled the space with a sense of longing and hope, beautifully setting the tone for the advent season ahead.



Catholic Life and Mission are flourishing at St. Dominic's: rooted in prayer, strengthened in sacrament, and expressed in action and service. We thank God for all the blessings He bestows upon our College here in Harrow.

UPDATE FROM THE CHAPLAINCY TEAM

On 14th December, St. Dominic's was filled with festive cheer as the annual Santa Dash took place. The morning got off to a brilliant start with Bobby leading a lively warm-up, singing '*It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year*' and setting the tone perfectly. We were delighted to be joined by students from Sacred Heart Language College, adding to the great atmosphere. Staff and students took part, running or walking the 5km route around the hill. Some of the fastest runners this year made it back to St. Dominic's in an impressive time under 25 minutes! Well done to Kiran, Sharun, Dominik and Aaron!

After the dash, everyone was rewarded with well-deserved hot chocolates, complete with cream and marshmallows, along with delicious mince pies. A huge thank you goes to Jacqui for helping to organise the event, along with the fantastic team at St. Luke's, for making the dash such a success.

A total of £1100 was raised on the day for this wonderful charity which provides specialist end of life and palliative care to people in Harrow and Brent. Donations are still open on ParentPay so there is still time to sponsor the Santa Dashers.



Congratulations to Zuzanna on her Certificate of Recognition from the Diocese of Westminster - Love in Action.

Zuzanna has been a member of the Chaplaincy Team here at St. Dominic's since her arrival in 2024 and has gone above and beyond to support all our volunteering and charity events. We are delighted that her contributions have been recognised!

PILGRIMS OF HOPE – JUBILEE YEAR 2025

PILGRIMAGE TO ROME



Thirty-three students and staff travelled to Rome from 6th-9th November for our Jubilee Pilgrimage, three warm Autumn days filled with prayer, history, and friendship.

We began at the *Scala Sancta*, climbing the Holy Stairs in reverence toward the Sancta Sanctorum – the “*Holy of Holies*”, once the personal chapel of the early Popes. From there, we continued to the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore, visiting the burial tomb of Pope Francis and pausing to pray before the crib relic.

A guided tour of the Colosseum and Roman Forum in the afternoon brought ancient history vividly to life. The next morning, we attended the Papal Audience in St. Peter's Square – a highlight for many. Students were thrilled as Pope Leo passed close to our group during his drive around the square, and we all received a blessing at the end of the audience. We then visited the beautiful Sistine Chapel and walked through the Holy Doors of St. Peter's Basilica - a profound and memorable moment for everyone.



PILGRIMS OF HOPE – JUBILEE YEAR 2025 PILGRIMAGE TO ROME



Our pilgrimage concluded with Mass at the Venerable English College, the English seminary in Rome, where many of the English martyrs were trained for the priesthood.

We returned to London grateful for the journey, the friendships formed, and the renewed sense of hope we carried home. Our thanks to Father David Reilly who accompanied us on this Jubilee Pilgrimage bringing spiritual support and enriching our time in Rome.



UPDATE FROM CORE RE

This year as part of our November Remembrance commemorations two speakers from the Commonwealth War Graves Commission came in to speak to the Year 2 Core RE students. Their talk was entitled “Discovering the Commonwealth War Graves Commission”, and it really was a voyage of discovery, inviting the students to:

- think about and discuss “What is remembrance?”;
- to consider why it matters that each of the Commonwealth dead should be commemorated by name on a headstone or memorial;
- learn how to use the CWGC to locate the nearest war graves to the College; and
- find out how to explore the casualty archive as part of researching their own family history.

It was a very moving talk in which the preciousness of each person who lost their life became real. We were shown a video clip and asked to watch for “the elderly man who pats the headstone of a mate of his who did not come back” and were reminded of “the random personal things we know about people we have lost like the way they liked their tea”.

The speakers showed us a map of the 150 countries and territories where there are CWGC cemeteries. They then told us about Tyne Cot cemetery in Belgium, which is the largest of the CWGC cemeteries. The aerial image they showed us of the cemetery is reproduced below. You could sense the impact the image had on everyone. From above, the sheer scale of the losses in World War I was starkly visible in the ranks of headstones, grouped into precise plot blocks, each headstone marking a life cut short.



|||||
COMMONWEALTH
WAR GRAVES
|||||



UPDATE FROM CORE RE

Would we have noticed, had we been standing among them, the quiet radicalism of their design - the absolute uniformity of the headstones, making no distinction of rank or status? Would we have realised that the typeface was special, created so that a soldier's name, regiment, age and date of death could be read both face-on and at an angle, making it easier for anyone searching for the grave of a son, a husband, a brother, to find it? I am not sure that we would. But should we visit Tyne Cot in the future, that knowledge will deepen our understanding and sharpen our sense of what the Commission set out to achieve.

The students were especially struck by the story of Assistant Section Officer Noor Inayat Khan, (shown right) posthumously awarded the George Cross for her courage and commemorated on the Air Forces Memorial at Runnymede. Noor has no known grave. After her execution at Dachau in 1944, her body was cremated, as was the fate of so many whose lives were taken in the camps. Recruited into the Special Operations Executive as a wireless operator, she was parachuted into occupied France fully aware of the dangers she faced. Within a week of her arrival, most of her circuit had been arrested through betrayal, leaving her as the last SOE radio link still at liberty in Paris. Although urged repeatedly to withdraw, Noor chose to remain at her post, transmitting whenever she could and evading capture for more than three months before she herself was betrayed. Her story brought home to the students the extraordinary risks taken by those who lived, and died, in the service of others.



It was, for all of us, a haunting talk, one that will stay in the memory long after the day itself. Yet it was also a hopeful one. The CWGC's work has not ended with the last century. Their teams continue the careful recovery of remains from former battlefields, striving to restore names where they can and, when identification is possible, inviting families to be present when their relations are finally laid to rest. In this meticulous, steadfast work, remembrance becomes something living, a commitment not simply to honour the fallen, but also to ensure that "their name liveth for evermore".

Helena Shaw – Head of Core RE

THOUGHTS FROM CORE RE YEAR 1

After every Year 1 Core RE lesson, students are invited to write about what they have learned and how it connects with their own values and beliefs. The reflections that follow are a small selection of their work from this term. Each lesson title is shown, followed by three students' responses. Some are longer than others, but all show thoughtful engagement with Catholic Social Teaching and a sincere desire to understand how their faith and convictions can be lived out in practice. Together, they offer a glimpse into the depth of thinking taking place in Core RE and the way our students are learning to connect belief with action.

Lesson 1: Why CORE Religious Education?

This lesson I learned about the history of St. Dominic's and how a Catholic college works. I have discovered how community and heritage has influenced the ethos of St. Dominic's. I also learned that the College's motto is 'Veritas' which means 'truth'. **(Mireya Sriram)**

This lesson I have learned about the background and heritage of St. Dominic's and how heritage can shape both communities and people as individuals. **(Amen Tedla)**

This lesson my opinion about where I am on my spiritual journey has developed because I discussed my views and my spiritual journey with the people on my table. All of us have different beliefs and world views and we shared our perspectives about different events in our lives and where we saw ourselves on our journey using the picture we were given. **(Kisses Guillermo)**

Lesson 2: Rite and Ritual.

This lesson I learned about the MP David Amess who was killed and the importance of the anointing of the sick and other sacraments. David Amess, who was a Catholic, would have wanted a priest to give him the last rites but he was not able to receive them because the police would not let the priest enter a crime scene. **(Kacper Bialek)**

This lesson my views about the spiritual significance of pilgrimages have developed. A pilgrimage is an important journey. I have been to Umrah as well as other shrines in Iraq and Iran. I believe they are important because going builds a sense of community as you are surrounded by individuals and you learn more about your religion. I have learned that for some people a pilgrimage can be a time of quiet reflection. **(Maryam Albatat)**

This lesson my views about the spiritual significance of pilgrimages have developed because I now understand the value of visiting a place that holds religious significance for the pilgrim. Religious places are often some of the most beautiful places. For me, one of these places is the Vatican in Rome. **(Ava Gollings)**

THOUGHTS FROM CORE RE YEAR 1

Lesson 3: Diversity, Dignity and Catholic Social Teaching.

This lesson I have learned about Catholic Social Teaching and its seven principles. Human dignity is at the top as it is the most important one. All humans have dignity simply because they are *people*. **(Diyana Lazarova)**

This lesson I have learned that through solidarity we can stand together as one body and fight against prejudice and inequality in the world. I think that inclusive actions, such as the Paralympics contribute to society's understanding of human dignity and diversity because they teach us that even though people may be disabled or perceived as less physically able, they are just as capable of achieving things like anybody else can. **(Sochima Mofunanya)**

This lesson I have learned how life-changing hope can be to someone who may feel empty of purpose. A physical disability cannot change a person's dignity and the simple recognition of this is very important. **(Mohamed Ibrahim)**

Lesson 4: What does the Lord require of you?

This lesson my views about the social issue my table chose to look at (The Assisted Dying Bill) have not changed because Catholic Social teaching teaches that human life is sacred so must be treated with care and valued. My views on Assisted Dying have not changed because I believe it is wrong as it would be the ending of a life God has created. There is also the possibility that when doctors say how long a person has to live, they might be wrong. **(Viviana Mariani)**

This lesson my views about the social issue my table chose changed because the people on my table opened my eyes to other points of view. It's beautiful to see people really interacting and caring about what each person thinks. Three weeks ago, we didn't even know each other's names! **(Maisam Hussain)**

Lesson 5: Called to Care – Exploring modern Chaplaincy.

This lesson my views on living the values of love, justice and peace have developed because I have been reminded of the need for Christians to seek the lost and the broken and to be a light in the darkness as we should love everyone due to the belief that all people are made in the Image of God (Imago Dei). I have been reminded about practical ways to do this. **(Aara Thevarajah)**

THOUGHTS FROM CORE RE YEAR 1

This lesson I have learned what a college chaplain does, what hospital chaplains do and what prison chaplains do. I have learned about the practical and emotional support they provide and the true impact chaplains have on people's lives. **(Kavin Thiruvurul)**

My views on living the values of love have developed this lesson because of learning about Chaplain Pugh in World War II and his bravery. It was so noble that he gave up his life to be with the men on the sinking ship who were trapped. What he did could only be done with a significant amount of love as part of his motivation. **(Reva Ravindran)**

Lesson 6: How good do we have to be (The Sermon on The Mount).

This lesson I have learned the importance of having integrity. I have also learned how Christians understand the Semon on the Mount. Some interpret it literally. Some understand it metaphorically. **(Sivanjah Sivayogan)**

This lesson I have learned that the Amish community believe in radical forgiveness. For example, one Amish community in Pennsylvania were able to forgive a man who had walked into an Amish school and ended the lives of five Amish girls. I truly cannot believe that anyone could have the capacity to be so incredibly generous! **(Alicja Szczepaniak)**

This lesson was about what Jesus said about not being angry, not swearing an oath (but always telling the truth) and loving your enemies. Jesus might have been using hyperboles and metaphors, but his message remains significant, true and relevant to us today. I think the Sermon on the Mount is one of the most debated texts in history because some people think he said all of it in one go and others think the sermon is a collection of his sayings. It is also hard to know whether we are meant to take everything Jesus said literally like the Amish. **(Lucy Athemi)**

Lesson 7: Is it fair; is it just?

I think Jesus told the parable of Lazarus and the rich man to teach people that the backstory of Lazarus does not matter i.e. why he's poor. It's how we respond to poverty that matters. Jesus is criticising those who deliberately turn a blind eye, when they could help those who are starving and destitute. He wants us not to be bystanders when things are unjust. **(Leona Rajabi)**

This lesson my opinion about fairness and justice developed because we looked at Millais' painting of the Rich Man and Lazarus. It is not just or fair that people struggling with poverty are overlooked. The painting has reminded me to help more often people who are not being treated properly and to show them compassion. **(Shahzeb Khan)**

This lesson my opinion about fairness and justice developed because of Millais' painting. It showed that even the little dog in the rich man's household had more sympathy for Lazarus than the rich man. He had completely turned his back on the poor man's suffering. **(Nivi Nair)**

THOUGHTS FROM CORE RE YEAR 1

Lesson 8: The Power of Forgiveness Part 1.

This lesson my views on forgiving developed. I'm now going to try to be more open-minded and open to forgiving since if everyone forgave others, this world would be a better place. **(Luiza Burla)**

This lesson I have learned that forgiveness is essential for growth and that it can be a process that takes time. However, it is healthier than holding grudges. I have also learned that justice and forgiveness can coexist. **(Kritika Raje)**

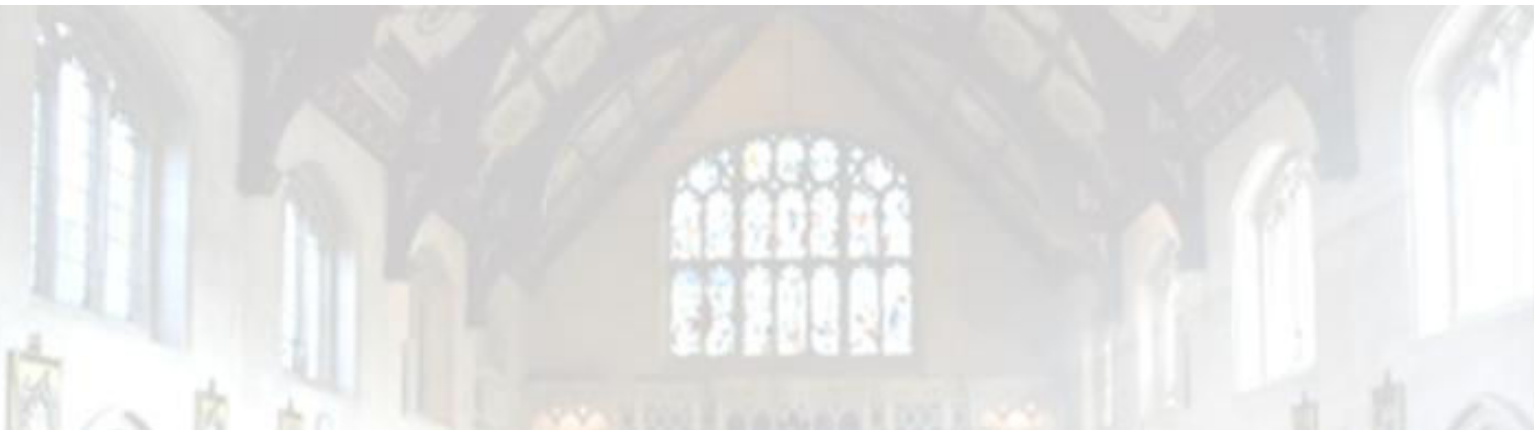
I think the most interesting character in the Parable of the Prodigal Son is the Father because his immediate reaction was one of joy. How quick he was to welcome his son, despite his behaviour and reckless spending! **(Arianna Polluk)**

Lesson 9: The Power of Forgiveness Part 2.

This lesson my views on whether there is such a thing as "unforgiveable" have developed because of learning about Simon Wiesenthal's story and his journey whether by leaving the bedside of the dying SS officer in silence was the right decision. I think someone who has committed terrible crimes cannot, in other people's eyes, regain their moral dignity but the person can try to forgive themselves dedicating their lives to doing good. **(Sam Stein)**

This lesson my views on whether there is such a thing as "unforgiveable" have developed because through looking at and discussing Rembrandt's painting I have been reminded of the mercy shown by the Father of the Prodigal Son. All of us get grace and mercy that we do not deserve. This means that if God forgives like the Father in the parable, we should too. **(Aara Thevarajah)**

This lesson my views on whether there is such a thing as "unforgiveable" have developed because I had never considered that forgiving someone could give them peace and give them back their moral dignity. Though nothing can take away the wrong action, and perhaps paying for it by going to prison, moral dignity can be regained. **(Anaya Reid)**



THOUGHTS FROM CORE RE YEAR 2

This term Year 2 students who were eager to put their thoughts into writing were invited to reflect on a Core RE talk that particularly struck them. The three pieces that follow come from those who stepped forward. Their reflections open a window into the themes we explore together in Year 2. They are thoughtful, personal, and moving.

These reflections are followed by examples of their recent assessment work. After a brief presentation on Van Gogh's painting *The Good Samaritan*, students were asked to consider how the painting speaks to them personally. Their responses reveal not only the quality of their work but true *learning of the heart*: a recognition of the demands their faith makes on how they choose to live, and a glimpse of young people taking those demands seriously.

Opening Core RE talk by Andrew Parkin ("Why do Core RE?") by Ayesha Hadi

Faith, for many people is an integral part of them, which informs their values. This talk was fascinating for me because it gave me space to think about my faith and to understand myself a bit more. Andrew told us about his first day at primary school. He then asked us to talk with the people next to us about what we remembered about our first day at primary school. This took me back and reminded me how my aspirations have changed on my educational journey. A key message of the talk and one which resonated with me is that we need to be open to different viewpoints, cultivate tolerance and be compassionate.

Andrew reminded us that St. Dominic's was founded, as an independent grammar school for girls in 1878, by nuns of the Dominican order. I was particularly struck by how St. Dominic's origins continue to shape the character of the College. Our Dominican tradition is not just something in the College's past; it still shapes the way the College feels and works today. It shapes how we live out community, tolerance and openness, values that matter to all of us as human beings.

In this talk, I found it helpful to think about the idea of the 'self' shaped by our faith, culture, and experiences. Understanding our own beliefs can support real personal growth and confidence. Andrew's talk also showed how our sense of self guides our moral compass, which I found important. It reminded me that being fair with ourselves can prevent overly harsh self-judgement. Showing compassion for others is central to our humanity, and recognising our own limits helps us do this with greater honesty.

I found the end of the talk especially moving. Andrew spoke about his mother, a woman of deep faith, and described the courage and peace she showed during her illness. He said she was the greatest influence on his own connection to Catholicism. His story encouraged me to think about the people in our own lives whose example supports us as we grow into adulthood. This talk offered an important reminder to reflect on our beliefs, our relationships, and the sources of guidance that help us face difficult moments with integrity and hope. What I especially liked was the way that the breakout discussions we had throughout the talk helped me to clarify my thoughts.

THOUGHTS FROM CORE RE YEAR 2

Talk by Andrew Chapman (Station Chaplain RAF) by **Eva Forgacz-Cooper**

How do you tell someone their partner has died in the line of duty? How do you comfort a person trying to rebuild their mind after witnessing horrors in a warzone? Can God be found even in the darkest moments of human experience?

These might sound like impossible questions, but for RAF Padre Andi Chapman, they are part of daily life. RAF Padres serve as chaplains in the Royal Air Force, offering spiritual guidance, emotional support, and most importantly, a safe and compassionate presence to both service personnel and their families. Whether it is reassurance in crisis, comfort in grief, or simply being someone who will listen, chaplains play a vital role in maintaining the emotional and spiritual wellbeing of those who serve our country.

The RAF Chaplaincy was established in 1918 on the same day the RAF itself was formed. From the very beginning, it was understood that moral, emotional, and spiritual strength are as important on the battlefield as physical training and skill. When lives are at stake and the pressure is immense, the presence of a chaplain can make all the difference.

Padre Chapman shared his journey to chaplaincy with us when he visited during our weekly Core RE lecture. He did not just wake up one day and decide to walk into a military base with a Bible. His path took years of dedication. He completed an undergraduate degree in Psychology at Leeds, three years of seminary training in Theology and Ministry at Durham, a further three years serving with the Lincoln Diocese, and then thirteen weeks of Phase 1 training at RAF College Cranwell. He learnt to march, salute, and endure the same conditions as every other recruit. He describes his calling as something placed on his heart by God, a purpose he felt compelled to follow.

His work has taken him around the world. Places such as Cyprus, Afghanistan, and the Falkland Islands. On his deployments, he has supported troops facing stress, trauma, and the realities of war. However, he reminded us that the role is not only about being there during deployments or emergencies. Much of a chaplain's work happens quietly, in offices and chapel rooms, or walking through the base ready to talk. They listen without judgement and without asking for anything in return. Crucially, they serve the whole personnel community, regardless of faith, background, identity, or belief. Everyone is welcomed. Everyone matters.

THOUGHTS FROM CORE RE YEAR 2

Padre Chapman also spoke honestly about real world issues affecting military families today. With the cost-of-living crisis hitting households across the UK, even serving personnel are turning to food banks, with chaplains across the country reporting growing need. It is a stark reminder that strength is not just needed on the battlefield. Sometimes the challenges are at home, and chaplains are there for those moments too.

Perhaps one of the most profound aspects of a chaplain's role is leading services for those who have passed away, honouring their life and service. In moments of grief, chaplains hold space for families, friends, and colleagues to remember, to cry, to celebrate their lives, and to begin healing.

Listening to Padre Chapman reminded us that behind every uniform is a human being. One with fears, hopes, doubts, families, dreams, and struggles. Behind those humans are chaplains like him who walk with them through the best and worst moments of their lives.

In a world that can sometimes feel chaotic and uncertain, it is comforting to know that roles like this still exist, roles defined not by power or rank, but by compassion and support. It reminded us that strength comes in many forms, and sometimes the bravest thing you can do is simply be there for someone else.



THOUGHTS FROM CORE RE YEAR 2

Talk by Bryan Johnston (Acting Vice-Principal and teacher of Art) by **Olivia Blackburn**

When you learn a new word, you notice it appears everywhere. This is not a coincidence, though it may be easy to see it that way; it is simply the absence of not knowing the word before.

Despite being at the College for over a year now, and being in the chapel plenty of times, I had never really taken the time to look around me and analyse the building. I do, however, remember first entering it and being struck by its sense of scale and atmosphere. Over time, however, familiarity meant I often entered without noticing my surroundings and left without reflecting on them much.

This perspective changed following Bryan's talk on **Religion and Art**.

His talk challenged us to consider the fundamental purpose of art, inviting us to think beyond the idea of art as merely decorative and instead view it as something created to express, communicate, teach and evoke emotions. Art, as Bryan explained, has always been a powerful form of human expression, long before artworks found their way into galleries. In fact, historically, it was religious spaces that were some of the most important 'public galleries' there were, providing communities with an accessible way to understand faith, values and stories when literacy was not universal.

This understanding encouraged us to reflect on our own chapel here at St. Dominic's, particularly the stained-glass windows. Each panel tells a story or symbolises an aspect of Christian belief: moments from the life of Christ, images of sacrifice and resurrection, and scenes that reflect hope, suffering and redemption. The windows are carefully designed not only to illustrate stories, but also to shape the mood of the space. Light filters through the colours in a way that encourages stillness and reflection, a subtle reminder that the chapel is not just a physical space, but a spiritual one as well.

What struck me most from this lecture was a simple idea, really: to take time to slow down and really *look*.

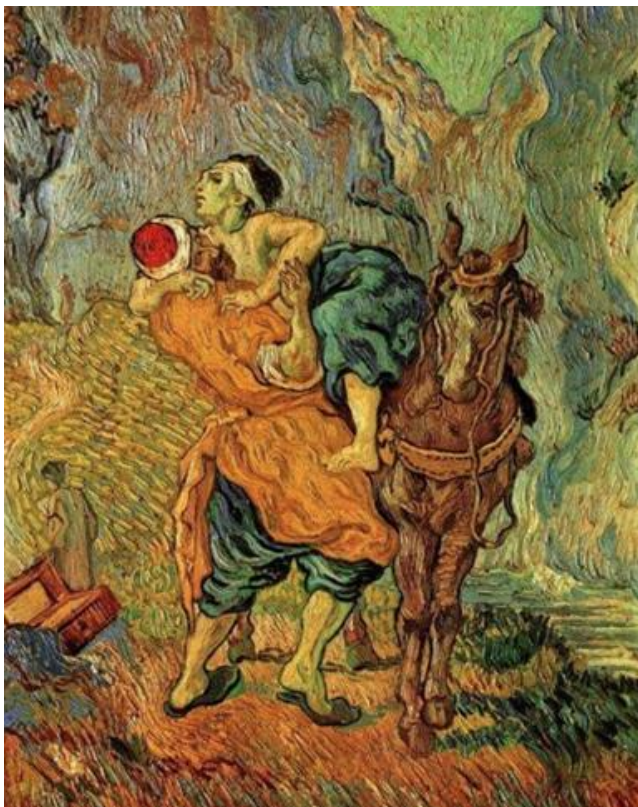
In a college environment that is constantly busy, it is easy to move from lesson to lesson without ever lifting our heads. Phones, deadlines and schedules fill every spare moment. Without realising it, we can become blind to the details that surround us every day. The chapel, I realised, had not changed at all from the first day I entered it. Only my attention had.

Since then, I have made a conscious effort to notice more. The images on the walls, the colours in the windows, even the feel of the space itself now seems richer and more meaningful. I have started asking myself what different details represent, what message they were intended to convey, and why they were put there in the first place.

Whether or not I always find the answers, I have found that the act of looking in and of itself has value. Bryan's talk was a reminder to pause, to be present, and to truly take in surroundings that have become too familiar for us to notice and appreciate them. Sometimes, all it takes is one moment of reflection to "see" in a completely new way; once you truly learn to look, you start noticing meaning everywhere.

YEAR 2 CORE RE ASSESSMENT

THE GOOD SAMARITAN



Imogen Day: Van Gogh's painting to me feels like the parable made painfully human, instead of the tidy kindness we may imagine from Luke 10:30-35. Van Gogh shows the Samaritan struggling, muscles tight, face strained, trying with real effort to lift a limp, half-dead man onto his donkey. The parable simply says he 'went to him' and put him on his own donkey, but Van Gogh paints what that actually looks like, awkward, exhausting and a little chaotic; the kind of help that leaves you sweating and unsure that you can manage it.

The donkey looks uneasy, the landscape swirls with tension and the wounded man is heavy, in a way that reminds you how real people feel when they need you. Van Gogh makes the story less about a heroic stranger, but more about an ordinary person choosing compassion even when it is inconvenient to do so and also uncomfortable. This is a reminder to me that love is not effortless; it is something that we lift, carry and sometimes struggle to hold onto. Compassion costs but it makes a real difference to the lives of those around you, along with your own.

Natalia Lipka-Kozanka: Vincent van Gogh's painting The Good Samaritan speaks to me in a deep and powerful way because it brings the biblical parable to life with honesty and emotional force. In it, Jesus tells the story of a man who is beaten, abandoned and ignored by people who were expected to help him. Both the priest and the Levite choose to walk past without stopping. Only the Samaritan who would have been seen as an outsider is moved with compassion and chooses to care for the injured man. Van Gogh takes this message of mercy and makes it feel immediate and human by showing the scene in a raw and physical way.

What stands out to me most in Van Gogh's version is the scenery shown in the Samaritan's actions. He is not presented as a heroic or perfect figure. Instead, he looks like an ordinary person using all his strength to lift the wounded traveller. His foot even slips out of his shoe which draws attention to how demanding real kindness can be and is not always convenient. This detail makes the story feel real rather than distant and shallow. It reminds me that compassion is not easy and that it often costs time energy and even comfort. Van Gogh seems to insist that love is not something peaceful and gentle all the time. Sometimes it requires real labour and a willingness to get involved in someone else's pain.



YEAR 2 CORE RE ASSESSMENT

THE GOOD SAMARITAN

Another important part of the painting is the way the priest and the Levite are shown. Van Gogh paints them as pale and almost ghost like devoid of life. They seem to fade into the edge of the scene with hardly any warm colour. Their lack of involvement makes them look spiritually empty as they are surrounded by the dulling cold hard rocks as opposed the live water and bright nature. This connects to the message Jesus teaches in the parable. It is not religious status or title that matters. What matters is what we do with that title to love others in a way we would want to be through compassion. In contrast to the priest, the Samaritan is full of energy and life. Van Gogh uses strong colours and swirling brushstrokes to give movement to the scene such as the brightest yellow in the whole painting. The river that rushes beside the figures seems to reflect this energy. It feels like a symbolic of bringing things to life or everyone no matter who they are or how much we may have in our box all connected as all rivers lead to the same output. Where there is compassion there is colour movement and hope.

Knowing that Van Gogh painted this work while staying in a mental asylum adds a deeper emotional layer. At that time, he felt isolated vulnerable and judged. He struggled with his own suffering yet chose to paint a story about care dignity and kindness to the hurting. This choice suggests that he connected personally with the message of the Samaritan. It is as if he longed for that same compassion for himself. The painting becomes not only a depiction of a biblical story but also a window into Van Gogh's desire for understanding and human connection.

What also makes this painting powerful is the way Van Gogh turns spiritual teaching into something grounded in real life. The vivid colours and dramatic movement make the viewer feel the urgency of the moment. The Samaritan is not simply an example of goodness. He becomes a model for how we should live. The painting challenges us to ask if we would be willing to step into difficult situations and offer real help. Van Gogh seems to say that love is an action and not a feeling or mentality and that the true test of faith is whether we choose to show mercy when it is hard not just what we believe in but what we do with that belief.

In the end The Good Samaritan speaks to me because it combines spiritual truth with emotional honesty. Van Gogh takes a familiar parable and fills it with colour movement and humanity. He shows that real compassion is demanding but also life giving. It invites me to think about the kind of person I want to be and encourages growth.

YEAR 2 CORE RE ASSESSMENT

THE GOOD SAMARITAN

Alexander Adeniyen: When I look closely at Van Gogh's painting of the Good Samaritan, the first thing that speaks to me is the immense effort and compassion shown in the moment the Samaritan lifts the injured man onto his horse. This instantly connects to the parable of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10: 30-35 where Jesus describes a man who is attacked, beaten, stripped and left 'half dead'. The painting captures the same vulnerability. The injured man's body hangs loosely, emphasising how helpless he is, while the Samaritan bends with real strain, showing the weight of another person's suffering both physically and emotionally. This reinforces the message of the parable; that true love of your neighbour requires sacrifice, inconvenience and getting involved, even when it is difficult. Van Gogh's use of swirling brushstrokes and intense colours helps the painting speak beyond the literal scene. The movement in the background, (especially the bold strokes in the sky and landscape) makes the moment feel alive, almost as if nature itself witnesses an act of compassion. To me, this reflects how Jesus teaches that acts of mercy bring life into the world.

The contrast between the harsh, rocky path and the small fast flowing river symbolises the difference between the choices made by the Priest and the Levite and the choice made by the Samaritan. While they walked past the suffering man, following their rigid religious duties, the Samaritan chose the 'living water' of love, stepping into the holiness of practical kindness.

Overall, the painting speaks to me by bringing Jesus' parable to life through colour, movement and emotion. It reminds me that being a 'good neighbour' is not about who someone is, but what we choose to do.

I hope that the above gives a real sense of what Core RE is about, the pride we take in our students' achievements, and why Core RE is at the heart of our curriculum and central to the life and mission of the College.

May the peace of Christ be with you this Christmas, bringing light to your days and hope to the year ahead.

Best wishes, **Helena Shaw - Head of Core RE**



ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

TWELFTH NIGHT

Our College trip to Shakespeare's Globe was honestly the best way to end a half term. Watching the Belfield production of Twelfth Night with Ronke Adékoluéjò as a feisty Viola and Pearce Quigley as a dour Malvolio made it feel unforgettable. We were lucky with the weather and it was warm enough on the wooden benches. Some of us decided to become groundlings to get a better view, which was fun. Pearce Quigley's Malvolio had us roaring with laughter, especially when he twirled his yellow stockings and read the letter aloud. He was so deadpan. The live music and dynamic staging - especially the shipwreck opening - completely transported us. Even a little October weather felt like part of the magic. I would definitely jump at the chance to go again and experience more of the Globe's immersive world.

Georgina Clyde - Head of English & Modern Foreign Languages



PHOTOGRAPHY ENRICHMENT BEHIND THE SCENES LIGHT AND SHADOWS OF LIFE: OUR WORLD

Working on this project for the past few weeks was a truly wonderful and fulfilling experience. Putting together this presentation was truly a work that came from a mix of photography, storytelling, and most importantly, teamwork.

[Photography-Our World.pptx](#)

We selected the theme “Light and Shadows of Life” as it provided the perfect opportunity to tell a truly engaging, encapsulating, encouraging story that comes from nature itself and the idea of how our human lives constantly revolve around this outstanding beauty of nature itself - one that we constantly overlook and take for granted – a perfect opportunity to truly magnify and spread the idea about the beauty of nature and one that we should cherish the most.

We first laid our foundations with the outline of our story – where we fixed on a cyclical structure, focusing on the circle of life, a cycle that is common in nature, and one that constantly surrounds our daily lives. Another prominent characteristic of our story is that it overlaps an entire day – further highlighting how amidst the repetitive routines of our daily lives, we undergo new interactions with nature every single day, no matter if it is going to school, going into work, or even going for a break – nature never stops and provides us with new discoveries.



PHOTOGRAPHY ENRICHMENT BEHIND THE SCENES LIGHT AND SHADOWS OF LIFE: OUR WORLD

The Prelude: Light kickstarts our story with a sunrise, taken on Roxeth Hill, a great starting point for our storyline symbolising the start of life, laying the foundations of our story about how human life has transformed nature, yet the beauty of nature allows us to reflect on life – effectively conveying how human life and nature seamlessly interweave with each other. What seemed particularly interesting was the transition to our Interlude: Shadows. We had to start introducing a turn in our story – allowing us to come to an agreement to focus on the idea of changes to human lives, shown in the photo of Choi Hung Estate and an abandoned building in Hiroshima. Most notably, we selected Choi Hung Estate (literally translated to Rainbow Estate), a housing estate built in 1963 in Hong Kong that was special for the rainbow pattern on the buildings. This was a significant, important residential area that was about to be demolished for new housing – leading to our first “shadow”, the idea of sadness and farewell – a landmark that could never be seen in person anymore but stored, in our hearts.

The second chapter of our story – Shadows is about serenity and rest. It commences with a sunset – a symbol of the end, yet we started with this to show that night is equally as important as our daytime – it is a time for rest and preparation for our next day. Our night lives are equally as vibrant compared to our daily lives – most importantly, how nature can inspire us by working tirelessly to aid and provide comfort for those in need – how artificial architecture and nature can seamlessly interconnect with each other. As a conclusion, we decided to focus on the end of a story – the passing of life. An apple lies on the ground, allowing it to return to nature and catalyse the start of new lives. Interestingly, this picture was also taken in school as well – a seamless integration to our aim to create a cyclical structure, starting from school, travelling around the world, and ending up back in school.

Working on this project was not only a presentation of photographs – but a message that intends to allow all of us to appreciate, to enjoy, and to observe nature in its outstanding beauty, perfectly uniting into our very own, daily lives.

Justin Lam - Year 1 Student

PHOTOGRAPHY ENRICHMENT BEHIND THE SCENES LIGHT AND SHADOWS OF LIFE: OUR WORLD

Participating in this photography competition is an experience which provides a chance to develop my presentation skills. Besides photography skills, cooperation and teamwork are all important elements of this presentation, which is a significant skill that modern society also requires.

In our world, many things can be viewed from both sides - both the light side and the dark side. The theme "Light and Shadows of Life" was chosen because it provides an opportunity for us to show both dimensions in our world. From the sunrise in the prelude to the sunset in the interlude, we depicted the side that delivers hope to the public, such as the sunrise in Cappadocia with many balloons or an ordinary night in Tokyo where people are going back home to meet their families.

Another side that allows individuals to reflect on themselves or remember the horrendous and sorrowful events of decades ago, such as the dome in Hiroshima surviving the explosion of Little Boy or Choi Hung Estate that were magnificent in the past. The dichotomy between hope and darkness in the modern world is the idea we would like to present through this presentation. We wish to deliver the message that instead of only focussing on one dimension, we can also look at other angles. We may be able to obtain another interpretation which is decent or realise the despairing past that we should not forget.

Darren Yip – Year 1 Student

When starting our presentation for the photography competition, our group at first was not sure what we were going to display. However, we did know that we wanted our presentation to be something more than a simple exhibit for our photos. When deciding upon the theme 'Light and Shadows', the decision was made not to explicitly show light and shadows. There was a want to create a story that represents the limbo and eventual imbalance between nature and people, as this clash of worlds is commonly used to portray the 'light and darkness' of perspectives.

My favourite part of this project was writing descriptions of the photos. I have never been great at taking pictures; however, I believe that writing gave me a great opportunity to appreciate the beauty of the photos provided by my excellent teammates.

William Laqui – Year 1 Student



SCIENCE DEPARTMENT NEW SCIENTIST LIVE EXHIBITION

Just before October half-term, the Science department took 45 students to the New Scientist Live Exhibition at the Excel London. Students were welcomed on site by scientists from multiple fields and were given a run down on what life is like as a scientist. Students also saw first-hand some of the various research projects that these scientists had been working on.

Students were given the option to watch lectures, in a TED Talk style, by various scientists throughout the day. There was a big focus on potential future careers after and university.

The students enjoyed the Exhibition and it really opened their eyes as to what the day-to-day is like for a scientist in any field related to STEM.

Luke Ray – Head of Physics



SPORT AT ST. DOMINIC'S

Sport at St. Dominic's has undergone significant development over the past four years. The College now benefits from a dedicated team of three staff members, comprising of a Head of Department, Sports Coordinator and a Strength and Conditioning Coach, six competitive sports teams, a comprehensively refurbished gymnasium, and an expanding Physical Education cohort. We have increased our presence in the Association of College's (AoC) league, in which we compete every Wednesday afternoon against other London-based colleges (and further afield when competing in cup competitions).

The College's objective is to provide students with extensive opportunities for sporting participation. In September, trials were conducted for all sports teams, attracting over 300 students. These teams receive weekly strength and conditioning sessions alongside high-quality coaching, occasionally delivered by external specialists. This provision has substantially enhanced the College's sporting performance, particularly given that St. Dominic's is not a specialist sports institution.

This academic year has witnessed an increase in gym memberships to over 100 students, facilitated by superior equipment and expert tuition. The introduction of a dedicated women-only session on Monday lunchtimes has contributed to a marked increase in female student participation.

In addition to the established sports in which the College competes - badminton, football, basketball, netball and volleyball - St. Dominic's has entered both a regional table tennis tournament and a cross-country event this year. This demonstrates the institution's commitment to broadening sports provision wherever feasible.

We look forward to the teams' return following the Christmas holiday to continue competing in the AoC league, with aspirations of securing league titles.



***Elena Synesi – Head of PE
Ryan Whitehurst – Sports Coach and
Coordinator
Bobby Hodge – Sports Assistant***

SPORTS REPORT

NEW GYM

The transformation of our gym over the summer has been truly remarkable. Thanks to generous support from the Governor's fund, we have been able to completely refurbish the facility with equipment from Matrix. This includes two racks with lifting platforms for developing power and strength, a range of cardiovascular equipment featuring treadmills, bikes, a ski ergometer and a stair master (for building aerobic endurance), and a sled track (to enhance functional movement). Additionally, we have plyometric boxes, kettlebells, free-weights and a variety of fixed resistance machines.

The cardiovascular equipment is particularly innovative, offering the option to select locations around the world and watch yourself cycle or run through them, or to log onto YouTube or Netflix to help pass the time whilst exercising. If you do not yet have a membership and are keen to get fit in the New Year, please do speak to Bobby who can, not only help you use the equipment safely, but also design a bespoke training program tailored to your fitness needs.



SPORTS REPORT

MEN'S FOOTBALL TEAM



The season has begun in an exceptional manner, marked by a highly successful trial in which over one hundred students competed for a place in a 24-man squad. St. Dominic's has since played two league fixtures, securing one victory and one draw. The team has also demonstrated strong form in the National Cup, achieving three wins from three matches. Their next fixture, scheduled for 7th January 2026, will see them compete in the Round of 32.

As the new year approaches, the squad remains determined to maintain their unbeaten record in both league and cup competitions and to continue building on the momentum established throughout the opening stages of the season.

TEAM	PLD	W	D	L	+	-	+/-	PTS
Barking and Dagenham College Barking and Dagenham College Mens Tier 2	4	2	0	1	14	8	6	6
St Dominics Roman Catholic Sixth Form College ST Doms Football 1ST5	2	1	1	0	7	4	3	4
New City College Hackney Redbridge Male 1	2	1	0	0	9	2	7	3
New City College Epping Male 1	4	1	0	2	5	8	-3	3
Barnet and Southgate College Team 2	4	1	0	1	6	10	-4	3
Capital City College Group capital city college (Enfield)	4	1	0	3	12	21	-9	3
New City College HSF Male 1	2	0	1	0	4	4	0	1

SPORTS REPORT

WOMEN'S FOOTBALL TEAM



The Women's Football team at St. Dominic's has undergone significant change this academic year, with the squad now consisting predominantly of new Year 12 students and only three Year 13 players remaining from the previous season. Despite this transition, the team has embraced the challenge with enthusiasm and commitment. This year, the team has been entered into the AOC London Women's League, a competitive division that presents a number of demanding fixtures and strong opponents.

The arrival of the new coach, Mike, has had a notably positive impact on the squad. His leadership, structured training sessions, and supportive approach have already contributed to visible progress in the team's performance and cohesion. The players have responded well to his guidance and are thoroughly enjoying their football, both in training and in competitive matches.

Although the league is particularly challenging this season, the team has shown promising potential. After three matches, St. Dominic's has registered one win and two losses. While the results may not fully reflect the effort and development seen on the pitch, it is still early in the campaign. There is clear belief that, as the players continue to grow in confidence and experience, they will be able to build momentum and achieve stronger outcomes as the season progresses.

TEAM	PLD	W	D	L	+	-	+/-	PTS
Saint Francis Xavier College Womens Football	5	5	0	0	28	7	21	15
New City College Female 2	2	1	0	1	5	4	1	3
Croydon College and Coulsdon College Croydon and Coulsdon Ladies	2	1	0	1	3	3	0	3
Barnet and Southgate College Team 2	3	1	0	2	2	6	-4	3
St Dominics Roman Catholic Sixth Form College St Doms Girls Football team 2024- 2025	3	1	0	2	7	19	-12	3
Capital City College Group capital city college	3	0	0	3	10	16	-6	0

SPORTS REPORT

BADMINTON

In April, the team competed at the National Cup Final held at Birmingham University, delivering a highly competitive performance throughout the round-robin matches. Despite the strong showing, the team finished in fourth place.

Badminton has continued to enjoy exceptional popularity this academic year, attracting over 100 students across both genders. The team conducts weekly training sessions at Vale Farm Leisure Centre. The current season is still in its early stages, with only one fixture completed thus far - an away draw against Newham College. This year represents something of a transitional period, as numerous experienced club players from the previous season have departed to join their respective university teams. Nevertheless, yesterday concluded the final training session of 2025, during which, awards were presented to the most improved male and female players. The team captains for this year are Daksh Patel and Namara Mistry.



TEAM	PLD	W	D	L	+	-	PTS
Hills Road 6th Form College Hills Road Badminton Team	1	1	0	0	10	0	3
Newham College Of Further Education Newham Knights Badminton	1	0	1	0	5	5	1
St Dominics Roman Catholic Sixth Form College Badminton 1STS	1	0	1	0	5	5	1
Leyton Sixth Form College	1	0	0	1	0	10	0

SPORTS REPORT

NETBALL TEAM

Following a winless record of eight consecutive defeats in the 2023/24 season, the Netball team achieved a remarkable turnaround in 2024/25, securing six victories from eight fixtures. This represents a significant and dramatic improvement in performance. This upward trajectory has been sustained into the current league season, where the team currently sits joint top of the table alongside our principal rivals, BCA. Furthermore, the team reached the third round of the National Cup - marking the College's inaugural appearance in this competition - before narrowly falling to Cirencester College in a closely contested match.



TEAM	PLD	W	D	L	PF	PA	PD	PTS
Berkshire College Of Agriculture BCA Netball	2	2	0	0	108	30	78	6
St Dominics Roman Catholic Sixth Form College ST Dom's Netball 1STS!	2	2	0	0	88	14	74	6
Capital City College Group capital city college netball 1	2	1	0	1	61	62	-1	3
Uxbridge College	1	0	0	1	14	58	-44	0
Newham 6th Form College Newham Knights Netball Team 1	3	0	0	3	13	120	-107	0

SPORTS REPORT

NETBALL – ENGLAND TEAM TRIAL

AoC Netball England College Team Trial at the University of Wolverhampton

Following our substantial improvement in Netball during the previous season, five players were selected to trial for a place in the England College Netball Squad. We travelled to Walsall over two consecutive days, where 65 of the finest netballers from 26 colleges across the country were assembled. We had joint representation of the highest number of players from any single college, which was, in itself, a considerable achievement and a testament to the standard of netball at the College. The girls participated in approximately three hours of consecutive short matches each day. Regrettably, on this occasion, none of the girls were selected; however, it was undoubtedly a valuable experience competing alongside the finest under-19 netballers in the country.



SPORTS REPORT

BASKETBALL TEAM



The Basketball team has enjoyed an excellent start to the season, mirroring the success of the Netball, Badminton, and Men's Football programs. The team remains undefeated in the league, having secured two victories and one walkover. The squad participates in weekly training sessions under the guidance of Brent Bulls' Coach, Shak, and has been joined by three second-year students who have continued their involvement with Basketball this year. The team is well-positioned to mount a strong challenge for the league title.

TEAM	PLD	W	D	L	PF	PA	PD	PTS	PCT
Capital City College Group CCCG (Kings Cross) 1	5	4	0	1	237	178	59	12	0.800
West Thames College West Thames College	2	2	0	0	48	102	-54	6	1.000
Barnet and Southgate College Team 2	4	2	0	2	205	184	21	6	0.500
St Dominics Roman Catholic Sixth Form College St Doms Basketball 1sts	2	2	0	0	100	66	34	6	1.000
St Charles College AoC Basketball	4	1	0	3	237	301	-64	3	0.250
New City College Havering Mens Basketball	2	0	0	2	85	51	34	0	0
City of London Highbury Grove COLAHG	3	0	0	3	135	165	-30	0	0

SPORTS REPORT

CROSS COUNTRY TEAM



On 13th November, the Tens Schools Cross Country Championship was held at Harrow School, bringing together over 20 of the most accomplished cross-country teams from across southern England. The College was represented by eleven female and four male students, all of whom are to be commended for their participation. Whilst the primary objective was participation rather than competitive placement, all representatives completed the course with strong finishes and have expressed enthusiasm for future events. Kristen Santana recorded the fastest time among our female competitors, whilst Aaron D'Cunha led the male contingent. Congratulations are extended to all participants, especially considering that several students had no prior running experience as recently as two months ago.

The College will return to Harrow School for the next fixture in March. Students interested in participating are encouraged to contact Bobby. Special recognition is due to Lisa Emerson for her dedicated work with the female runners through her Running Club enrichment programme, and to Bobby for coordinating this event.

SPORTS REPORT

TABLE TENNIS TEAM



The Table Tennis team has begun their season in outstanding fashion, delivering an impressive performance at their first major competition of the year: the Jack Petchey Regional Tournament. St. Dominic's dominated the event, securing a comfortable victory and earning the title of Regional Champions. This achievement marks a significant milestone for the team and reflects their dedication, discipline, and strong early-season form.

As a result of their success, the team has qualified for the London Finals, which are scheduled to take place on 21st January 2026. The players are eagerly anticipating the opportunity to compete at this higher level, with their focus now firmly set on continuing their excellent run of form. With determination and continued hard work, the team is hopeful of progressing even further and earning a place at the national stage later in the season.

SPORTS REPORT

VOLLEYBALL TEAM



The Volleyball team has enjoyed a strong start to the season, marked by an outstanding turnout at trials, with over 80 students competing for only 20 available places. Such high participation reflects the growing interest in the sport and the increasing depth of talent within St. Dominic's. The level of competition for selection clearly demonstrates the quality and enthusiasm now present on the court.

This academic year, St. Dominic's entered the Volleyball team into the AoC London League for the first time, as well as the National Cup, marking an important step in the development of the programme. Although the season is still in its early stages, unforeseen delays - largely due to opposing teams not yet being ready to compete - have meant that the team has not played any league fixtures to date.

However, the team did make their competitive debut in the National Cup and delivered an admirable performance. They progressed impressively to the Round of 16, where they faced Farnborough College in a tightly contested match. Despite a courageous effort, St. Dominic's were narrowly defeated in the final set, losing 3-2 in what proved to be a thrilling encounter. Given that this was the team's first appearance in a national competition, the College is immensely proud of their achievements and the determination they showed throughout the campaign.

The team will now shift their focus to the upcoming league fixtures and will strive for a successful season ahead. Under the expert coaching and leadership of Chris Wong - one of the College's highly skilled coaches and teachers - the players are well positioned to continue their development and compete at a high standard in the months to come.

SPORTS REPORT

INTRA-COLLEGE VOLLEYBALL TOURNAMENT

On Thursday 13th November, we hosted our fourth volleyball intra-college tournament. Thirty competitors making up five teams battled it out to get their chance to sign the trophy ball that has been handed down from year group to year group.

In the semi-final stage, 'Team Romania' gave 'To Be Confirmed' a tough battle, with some amazing feats of athleticism to keep the scores close. In the other semi-final 'Teague Time' came through against team 'No Name', to set up an enthralling final. Both finalists have members who play on the College Volleyball team, so the standard was high. 'Teague Time' was made up of Year 1 students and 'To Be Confirmed' of Year 2, so there was an added element of competition as well. In the end, 'To Be Confirmed' proved the dominant force and won the competition (see photo below).

Many thanks go to Chris Wong for his outstanding support to the growth of volleyball at this College. His dedication has seen the sport grow from a pastime activity to a team that now competes in the AoC League. Both the students and I are forever grateful for his support.



WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY

World Mental Health Day on 10th October offered our College community a chance to pause, reflect and come together in support of wellbeing. St. Dominic's was filled with warmth and connection as students and staff took part in activities designed to highlight the importance of looking after our mental health and wellbeing.

Under the Shack, the **'Meet and Mingle'** event encouraged students to take a break from their routines and enjoy a light-hearted game of *Uno*. Laughter, conversation, and friendly competition created an atmosphere that reminded everyone of the value of simple social interactions and taking time to unwind – a wonderful opportunity for students and staff to meet and engage with someone they maybe had not before! Alongside this, the College sold **'Toad-ally Awesome'** pin badges, encouraging people to show appreciation for a peer or member of staff who had made a positive impact on their day. These small tokens of gratitude carried a powerful message, and with all proceeds going to the charity *Mind*, they also helped support those facing mental health challenges across the UK.

Meanwhile, the courtyard hosted the impressive **'Row-athon'**, where staff and students rowed continuously for an unbroken four and a half hours!! Their remarkable effort covered 42,000 metres and burned 2,256 calories, demonstrating both physical endurance and the positive influence exercise can have on mental health and overall wellbeing. The event drew plenty of support and showcased the strength of our community when we work together for a meaningful cause.

Well done to all involved for making World Mental Health Day such an uplifting and inspiring celebration across St. Dominic's.

Bryan Johnston - Acting Vice Principal



OPEN DAY FOR AUGUST 2026 INTAKE

We held our annual Open Day event for August 2026 intake on Saturday 11th October 2025. With 2,000 Year 11 students registering on the day, accompanied by family and friends, the campus was exceptionally busy with 4,500 visitors on the day.

Our Student Ambassadors acted as tour guides around the College to ensure prospective students had the opportunity to discuss course options and academic achievements with our experienced Teaching staff. Andrew Parkin, Principal, delivered his talk five times over the day, to packed audiences in Siena Hall.

There were also opportunities to visit our Student Support in Study+, the Library and Learning Centre to meet the Librarians, Personal Tutors and Careers Team, discuss student leadership and enrichment opportunities with our Student Executive and to meet our Chaplaincy Team in our beautiful Chapel.

The feedback from the day was overwhelmingly positive and the College remains immensely proud of its students and staff for making it such a successful occasion.



OPEN DAY FOR AUGUST 2026 INTAKE

Our Open Day experience feedback rated: 4.67/5



"It was extremely helpful in understanding how students like the school. The A-Level options and the classes presentations were amazing in allowing myself to see what each subject has to offer. The tour guides were also great and intuitive when talking about themselves and their advice for options and further education. As a GCSE student, it was nice to hear about experiences from older students."

"I enjoyed how welcoming the teachers on site were and how they were really trying to guide me across picking the right choice and from the first interaction with them it's like they have known me for a long time, so I really appreciated the support I received today."

"The best part was talking to the current students as they shared their personal experiences and were very useful in suggesting ideas for subjects, sharing revision tips, and answering all my questions: very inspirational!"

"I attended your open day with my son yesterday and to say how very impressed I was by the school, the pastoral care and your students. They were fantastic and so knowledgeable. My son currently attends a private school and I can see that St. Dominic's is a step up from what he is receiving now."

Angela McCormack - Admissions Officer



THE LIBRARY AND LEARNING CENTRE

The Library and Learning Centre has had a busy start to this academic year. We welcomed our new cohort of First Years, successfully issuing 1800 textbooks in September; it is a lovely way in which to get to know new students, many of whom are now familiar faces in the library. Our silent study spaces are often near capacity with many students choosing to work in the LLC during their Directed Study and free periods.

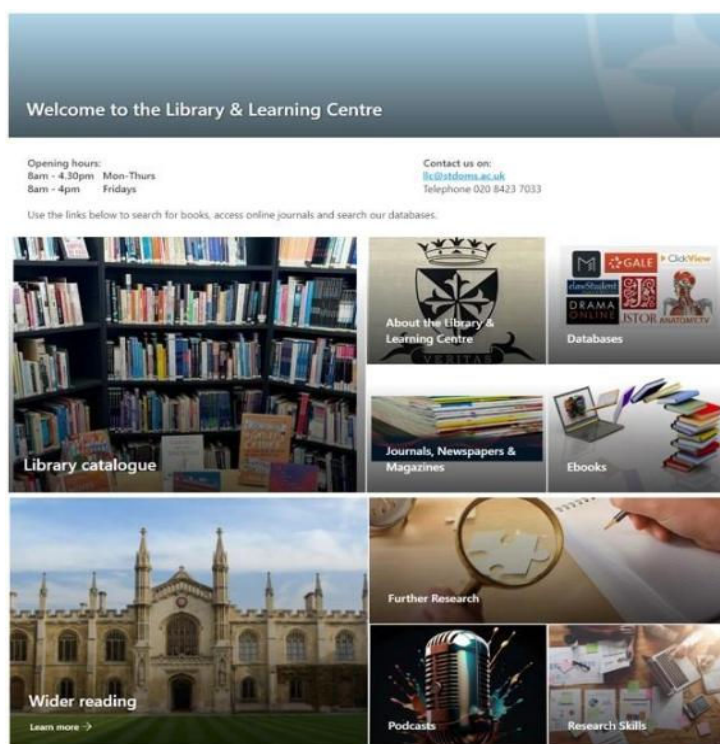
I had the pleasure of visiting all Tutor Groups at the start of the year; to introduce them to the LLC team (myself, Lorna and Deborah) and highlight the resources we have available. I have also been visiting lessons to give a more in-depth look at subject specific resources.

We are well placed to support the VESPA programme, not only with a lovely environment in which to study but with many resources for students to deepen their knowledge, love and understanding of a subject, both subjects they are currently studying and those which they might like to study at university. Our SharePoint page allows students to access a wide range of resources such as the library catalogue listing books and ebooks, wider reading lists by subjects, online journals and newspapers such as the A-Level Review Magazines, the FT.com and databases such as JSTOR, Gale and eLawStudent.

It is encouraging to see so many students taking the opportunity to engage in wider reading. The most popular subjects this term have been engineering, medicine, economics, law and physics with a total of 1767 books issued so far this term! Our fiction collection is also very popular and this term we have enjoyed two meetings of book club and look forward to reading more and meeting again in the New Year.

We celebrated World Poetry Day with the winners, Rebecca (Year 1) and Eva (Year 2), reading their poems out loud and we look forward to celebrating reading for pleasure on World Book Day in March next year with a literary quiz and book lucky dip.

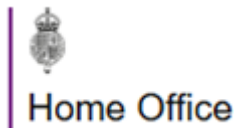
Helen, Lorna & Deborah – LLC team



CAREERS DEPARTMENT

We started the new term with many planned careers events and the preparation for processing Year 13 UCAS 2026 applications. Over 600 students have already completed their applications and we are working to process them all before the UCAS deadline and 'equal consideration' date 14th January 2026. We aim to send most of them before the Christmas break and many have already received some very good offers!

The UCAS 2025 cycle was extremely successful with over 90% of students successfully starting university. Over 50% went to Russell Group Universities and we are very proud of all of those who have progressed to Higher Education. Every year, more of our young people consider Higher and Degree Apprenticeships, which is very impressive and they are successfully working in companies such as Deloitte, EY, The Home Office, KPMG and RAF Intelligence to name a few.



Our current Year 12 students have already begun the process of researching their options for university, apprenticeships, training and employment. Signing up to our Careers and Opportunities Portal, they receive a wide range of work experience opportunities and insight days from employers and stakeholders as well as careers events in the College.

We look forward to the new term in 2026 and working with our young people to inspire them and support them in their next steps.

The Autumn Term Careers calendar began with an insightful presentation for Year 13 students on Choosing a University and Course, delivered by Dr Alisha Mohindra from the University of Leicester. During the session, students were guided through the key factors to consider when making their higher-education choices, including course structure and modules, student outcomes, and campus facilities. Dr Mohindra also highlighted the value of opportunities such as study-abroad programmes and placement years, encouraging students to think broadly about how university life can support both their academic and personal development.

On 15th October, Lasana Edwards from the University of Hertfordshire delivered an engaging talk on what universities are seeking from the new personal statement format. The interactive session offered Year 13 students' practical guidance on avoiding clichés and demonstrated how thoughtful super-curricular activities can help applicants stand out.

CAREERS DEPARTMENT

On 16th October, Year 13 Mathematics students explored the importance of data analytics in industry during a talk by Dr Jack Fosten from the Bayes Business School. The session provided valuable insight into how mathematical skills are applied in real-world business decision-making. It also highlighted the importance of analytical, computational, and quantitative skills in the graduate market.



On 5th October, the Maths Department hosted its annual STEM Speed Networking event, designed to help students explore a wide range of career pathways within Engineering, Mathematics and Computer Science. We were delighted to welcome representatives from TfL, City St George's, Queen Mary University of London, Deloitte, Oak National Academy, Brunel University and British Airways. In a fast-paced, carousel-style format, students had the opportunity to speak directly with our visitors, asking questions about their career journeys, day-to-day roles and the skills needed to succeed in their fields.



CAREERS DEPARTMENT

For students applying to apprenticeships, we hosted a 'Meet the Apprentices' Q&A session featuring alumni currently working at Deloitte, Taylor Wessing, the Home Office and EY. This informal event gave students the chance to ask questions about life as an apprentice and gather valuable advice on navigating the application process.



Following this, on Wednesday 26th November, we ran our first Mock Assessment Centre. Students took part in the 'Hat Factory' exercise, a corporate team-building task designed to highlight the key skills employers look for during assessment centres. In this lively and fast-paced challenge, teams worked to maximise profits for their 'factory' while demonstrating effective planning, communication and problem-solving. Apprentice alumni from Cisco and Barclays Bank observed the groups and offered constructive feedback on their teamwork and performance.

First Year students began their careers journey by signing up to the Careers Portal, where they receive personalised opportunities tailored to their subject interests and future career aspirations. These range from work experience placements and careers events to lectures and summer schools, all of which contribute valuable super-curricular experiences for future university and apprenticeship applications. Students have also registered with Unifrog, an online platform that allows them to explore different job roles, labour market information, apprenticeships and university courses.

Looking ahead, our next major event is the annual Higher Education and Careers Day on Monday 26th January. On this day, First Year students will have the chance to meet more than 75 universities, employers and apprenticeship providers at our Careers Fair, as well as attend two subject-specific talks of their choice. This event offers an excellent opportunity for students to gain insight into what it is like to study or work in their areas of interest and to explore the wide range of pathways available to them.

We wish you all a very Happy Christmas and Peaceful New Year – from everyone in the Careers Department.



Anna - Careers Leader
Lisa - Careers Adviser and Events Coordinator
Jharna - Careers and UCAS Assistant
Lorna - Work Experience Coordinator

DRAMA DEPARTMENT

Trip to 'Oliver!' on 8th October 2025, Gielgud Theatre, London

On Wednesday 8th October we took fourteen of our A-Level Drama and Theatre Studies students to see *Oliver!* with me, Deborah and Andrew accompanying. A handful of students sitting with Andrew in the stalls, while the rest of us were up in the Upper Circle worked in our favour as we had two genuinely different experiences of the same show, which led to some brilliant comparisons afterwards - who caught what, who saw things the others did not, and how the production landed depending on where we were seated. You could feel their excitement walking into the theatre, and the conversations on the way out were exactly the sort of things we want them to be thinking about so early in the course.

The moment the workhouse scene began, you could sense the students leaning forward - taking it in, noting the atmosphere created, the shapes and patterns on stage, the sudden shifts of energy. Then, of course, the whole tone changed the minute we got to Fagin's den. I should say here that I know Simon Lipkin (Fagin) both as a friend and professionally, and I have worked with him before, so I was genuinely curious to see what he would do with it. In true Simon fashion, he brought his own version of the character: a bit cheeky, a bit unpredictable, full of those tiny, improvised glances and moments of 'I know you are watching, let's have a little fun with this' which are completely him. The students picked up on it straight away - they could see how an actor can take a role everyone thinks they know and just tilt it slightly so it becomes theirs.

Certain numbers really stood out, especially for those upstairs who could see the full stage pictures. They were talking about movement patterns, how the cast filled the space, and how scenes transformed without anyone really noticing the mechanics behind it. Meanwhile, the stalls group had a completely different relationship with the performers - closer to the expressions, the vocal detail, the small choices that often get missed from higher up. Listening to them compare these two viewpoints on the journey home was honestly one of the best parts of the evening.

They came away buzzing - not in a vague "that was good" way, but genuinely ready to talk about acting choices, design decisions, how character relationships came across, and what they want to apply in their own work. If this is the level of engagement we are getting in October, their Live Theatre Evaluations later in the year are going to be all the stronger for it.

It was a really good trip, a valuable one, and it's set the tone nicely for what's already shaping up to be a busy, ambitious, theatre-filled year for us.

DRAMA DEPARTMENT

CHICAGO: TEEN EDITION

Rehearsals for Chicago: Teen Edition are now in full swing, and it is already shaping up to be the most exciting and ambitious production we have staged at St. Dominic's in years. This is a production with teeth, rhythm, attitude, and a cast who are absolutely throwing themselves into every moment - and if you *think* you know Chicago, think again.

We are taking this musical into bold new territory. This year's production will feature full audience participation, meaning the audience will be drawn directly into the world of the show. Expect interaction, surprises, moments that change depending on how the audience responds, and a cast who are learning not just choreography and songs, but how to command an entire room. The story, the score, the iconic numbers - all remain, but the experience will be uniquely St. Dominic's.

The company is working incredibly hard. The vocals are strong, the choreography is sharp, and the students have already found a fierce, playful, confident energy that fits this show perfectly. Each rehearsal brings another moment where everything suddenly clicks into place and we realise: *this is going to be big*. Chicago is a piece that demands precision, stamina and presence, and our students are meeting that challenge with of focus and maturity we are genuinely proud of.

This is absolutely a show you will want to see - whether you are a student, a parent, a member of staff, or someone who simply loves theatre. The atmosphere, the music, the storytelling, the audience involvement...it all adds up to an event rather than just a performance.

Tickets go on sale in January and we fully anticipate selling out – so get your tickets before they are Chica-gone!

Put the dates in your diary now:

Wednesday 4th & Thursday 5th February 2026 at 7pm.

Tickets on sale in January

£5 Students • £10 Adults

More details coming soon - but trust us:

You will not want to miss this show.

Stephen Leib – Head of Theatre Studies

BIOLOGY AND GEOGRAPHY

A JOURNEY THROUGH NAPLES



Prior to October half-term, our College set off on a four-day, three-night adventure to Naples, Italy, for a joint Biology and Geography trip that somehow managed to be educational and ridiculously fun at the same time. With teachers, classmates, and far too many backpacks to carry, we explored some of the most fascinating cultural and natural sites in the region.

Day 1: San Lorenzo and Napoli Sotterranea

Upon landing in Naples our first day began with a visit to San Lorenzo, a lively area blending historic streets with a bustling market atmosphere. It was the perfect introduction to Naples - colourful stalls, busy locals, and the kind of energy that instantly wakes you up after a 3am airport run.

From there, we headed underground to Napoli Sotterranea, the ancient subterranean city that lies beneath the modern streets. A guide led us through narrow tunnels and old chambers while explaining how the underground network formed over centuries and how it had been used during different periods of history. For Geography, it linked directly to topics like urban development and resource use. As for Biology, the guide pointed out how the constant temperature and humidity shape the types of organisms that survive in those spaces. Overall, it was an exhilarating first day filled with lots of knowledge and most importantly, food!

BIOLOGY AND GEOGRAPHY

A JOURNEY THROUGH NAPLES



Day 2 - Climbing Mount Vesuvius

The second day was hands-down the most dramatic: the climb up Mount Vesuvius. The path spiralled up the volcano, and as we got higher, the air thinned, the wind picked up, and the views became absolutely unreal - Naples on one side, the sea on the other. Our expert guide covered the causes, distribution and hazards of volcanoes along with the succession that happens after an eruption. We all learned so much about Mount Vesuvius history and the landscape we could see. Biology and Geography combined in action! Most impressively, reaching the summit felt like a collective victory. There is something about climbing a volcano together that makes everyone weirdly bonded.

Day 3 - Pompeii

On our third day we travelled to Pompeii. The site blended archaeology, history, and science in one hit. The effects of this natural disaster were very moving to see, particularly the preserved casts of the victims of the 79AD eruption. We explored preserved gardens, and rooms that still held echoes of the people who once lived there. The amphitheatre was impressive, seeing where the gladiators lived was eye opening and the excellent preservation of the wall art was surprising. It was a quiet, reflective day - the kind where you wander, take photos, and feel lucky to be seeing something you have only ever studied in textbooks.

BIOLOGY AND GEOGRAPHY

A JOURNEY THROUGH NAPLES

Day 4 - The Amalfi Coast and our Boat Trip

Our final day ended on a completely different vibe: the outstandingly picturesque Amalfi Coast. After days of ash, ruins, and underground tunnels, stepping into sunshine and blue water created a lovely inner peace. We went on a boat ride, taking in the high cliffs, greenery and the famous coastal towns, unfortunately we did not see any dolphins. We had time to explore the beautiful town of Amalfi, look at their sea defences and try the viral lemon ice cream.

Towards the end of the trip, we had a moment of pure chaos when it looked like we might miss our flight. There was definitely some panic, but honestly it also felt like part of the adventure - one of those experiences that is stressful in the moment and hilarious afterwards. It would not have been the end of the world, but the rush, the laughing, and the relief when we finally made it onto the plane turned it into a moment we will all remember. It was the perfect, messy, unforgettable finish to a trip full of good vibes and memories we will be talking about for ages.

A huge thank you to our teachers for organising the trip, guiding us through every stop, and actually learning along the way. None of these experiences would have happened without them, and we are genuinely grateful for the time, effort, and patience they put into making this adventure possible.

Sama Ali and Diema Mathko - Year 2 students



MUSIC DEPARTMENT

SCHUBERT'S MASS NO. 2



Last Thursday, the school held its annual Autumn Concert, where several musicians performed pieces for Remembrance Week in support of the Royal British Legion. The first work was *God Moves in a Mysterious Way*, composed by our own Patrick Miles (with text by William Cowper), and conducted by Eva Rubin. This moving piece featured soprano Janet Oates singing over a beautifully crafted orchestration for flute (Imogen Day), alto saxophone (Charles Rowe), bass clarinet (Patrick Miles), strings (Natalie Klenert and Abigail Kacki), piano (Paul Ayres), and percussion (Tiana Mwendah and Kelly Fernandes). Originally written as a hymn by Cowper in 1773, the text reflects on the mysterious nature of divine purpose; Miles's musical vision brought a unique colour and depth to the concert.

We then heard from three second-year music students: Abigail Kacki, Eva Rubin, and Kelly Fernandes. Abigail delivered an excellent performance of *Warum?* Op. 12, No. 3 by Robert Schumann - a delicate, questioning piece whose German title translates to "Why?". It was inspired by E.T.A. Hoffmann's *Callots Mainer*. Eva performed *Capricho Árabe* on classical guitar with great finesse. Composed by Francisco Tárrega after travelling through Andalusia, the work celebrates the rich Arabic and Moorish influences on Spanish music. Kelly concluded the student solos with a heartfelt performance of *Somewhere Over the Rainbow*, in the soulful arrangement by Eva Cassidy. Her interpretation beautifully captured the piece's emotional warmth.

The choir followed with *Be Who God Meant You To Be*, featuring an exquisite soprano solo by Grace Sheehan. The piece was specially commissioned for our College, and Grace's expressive vocals brought out all of its intended poignancy. To close the evening, the choir - accompanied by string quartet and organ - performed Schubert's *Mass No. 2 in G major*, D167, featuring stunning solos from Celeste Reed and Qaiz Rodrigues. Composed in 1815 for Schubert's home parish, the Mass has a gentle, devotional character, emphasising lyrical and expressive melodic writing.

Sarah-Jane Preece - Year 1

MUSIC DEPARTMENT PROMS



On 7th September I took the Music students to a Prom at the Royal Albert Hall. Our very own Andrew Parkin was performing in the BBC Chorus in Arthur Bliss's *The Beatitudes*, a cantata composed for the reopening in 1962 of Coventry Cathedral after it was destroyed in World War 2. It has been described as a musical prayer for a 'troubled world'. We also heard a haunting elegy by Ruth Gipps, inspired by a William Blake illustration of the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse. The highlight for students was undoubtedly the iconic Piano Concerto by Grieg, played by prize-winning young Viennese pianist Lukas Sternath making his Proms debut.

Abigail Gorton – Director of Music



MUSIC DEPARTMENT PROMS

On 7th September, the music students of St. Dominic's and a few other students visited the Royal Albert Hall for a special evening concert as part of the BBC Proms.

The concert began with Ruth Gipps' *Death on a pale horse*, a whirlwind of life and death, darkness and light. The work gets its name from William Blake's watercolour vision of death, and Gipps captures the image perfectly in her music, so much so that one could almost see the fierce steed and its macabre rider rampaging through the concert hall as we listened along.

Next on the programme was Grieg's famous piano concerto in A minor. From beginning to end, the BBC Symphony Orchestra and the soloist Lukas Sternath took us on a journey through Norway, with playful, lyrical folk-melodies and a Romantic-era virtuosity on the piano. Sternath hammered through the dramatic opening flourish like a steam train, and the final movement, which took influence from the Norwegian Halling dance, reinstated the concerto's inextricable link to the composer's homeland.

Following this was 'The Beatitudes' by Arthur Bliss. This was the most anticipated work of the night, as our own Principal, Andrew Parkin, was singing in the Symphony Chorus! The Beatitudes were first written in St. Matthew's Gospel, and they were a collection of blessings recounted by Jesus during his Sermons on the Mount and on the Plain. In Bliss' transformation of the text to music, these blessings were sung with true passion by the skilled chorus and accompanied by the powerful organ and orchestra.

Throughout the work, there were moments of calm and contemplation contrasted with moments of divine grandeur. This slow build-up of drama culminated in the 'Voices of the Mob', when we felt an outburst of violence ("*Persecute him and revile him...destroy him, kill!*") echo across the venue. However, it was quickly resolved by the tender strings and soloists in the Epilogue: O Blessed Jesu.

All in all, this concert was a mosaic of emotions. Our ears and minds were guided across an image of death, to the jovial folk tunes of Grieg's Norway, and the evening concluded with the company of a grand chorus and a blessing of hope.

Eva Rubin – Year 2 Student

NATIONAL POETRY DAY 2025

The theme for National Poetry Day 2025 was 'play', and students were invited to interpret this in any way they liked. A great number of students across both years worked hard on poems and submitted work that took the theme in many different directions. Below are the Year 1 (Rebecca) and Year 2 (Eva) winners, whose work stood out in both its creativity and skill. We enjoyed the wistful nostalgia of Rebecca's tightly composed work and the truly original video gaming metaphor of Eva's politically charged piece. Both winners took home vouchers to spend on their reading.

YEAR 1 Winner – Untitled by Rebecca Chiamaka Ihegbu

I still reminisce over those days.
Before toyboxes full of dreams
turned into briefcases of doom.
How our spaceships of ambitions were traded for
bleak Mondays
Oh, what a shame to drift away so soon.
Now I recollect in solitude...
Paintings once decorated with hope and glee
Have been traded for paperwork composed of
letters and glum
Is this all we were meant to be?
Our playgrounds of emotions have been chartered
During my commute. I gaze out the window,
thinking about what could have been
A cosmic playground decorated with twinkling
stars, moons of cheese and planets of hope.
Snatched out of our hands and rebranded to us
through a tiny microscope.
Nevertheless, I still reminisce
When sleep was a form of punishment
Now it is crucial for my stability
Oh, this loop I find myself in, up to this day
If only I could still play.



NATIONAL POETRY DAY

Year 2 Winner - Spawning In by Eva Forgacz-Cooper

We spawn at birth, dropped on a loading screen,
no choice in the map, not one say in the team.
We are not citizens,
we are avatars,
spawned into a map we didn't choose,
coded into systems we never signed off on.
They press buttons, our borders redraw,
a flick of a joystick, another new law.
They grip the controllers
while we grind for survival,
pressing buttons that decide
who eats, who starves,
who glitches out of the system entirely.
To them it's strategy.
To us it's eviction notices,
hospital waiting lists,
borders locked like iron doors.
Who wins when the players can't refuse?
Who plays when the players cannot choose?
We are told to 'play fair'
while the cheat codes are carved
into their brains.
They forget to mention,
the scoreboard only flashes
for the powerful.
We should be angry.
We should rage quit.
We only have one world. There's not another to unlock.
We only have one world. Something is wrong with it.
We can pull the plug,
smash the console,
rewrite the game entirely.
Because we are not their playthings.
And it's time for them to respawn.



BLACK HISTORY MONTH AT ST. DOMINIC'S

We were delighted to welcome Akyaba Addai-Sebo, co-founder of Black History Month in the UK, to our College on Thursday, 16th October to give a talk that stayed with us long after it ended. Interviewed by our school governor, Rosemary Laryea, he shared the moment that sparked his journey: a colleague's young son once asked, "Mum, why can't I be white?" That question revealed the deep struggle some Black British children face with their identity and inspired him to start Black History Month.

Gentle, considerate and measured in his responses, Akyabba spoke to a fully occupied Chapel of Year 1 and 2 students and staff and left no doubt of the challenges posed by generations of black, black Asian and Afro-Caribbean heritage posed in Britain in the 1980s and spoke of the enormous progress that has been made but also yet to come.

Hearing him speak so passionately made us realise how one small moment can grow into something much bigger. We left the event feeling moved, as even though we might not create the next national movement, we can still choose to make a positive difference.

***Tanishka Maheshwari – Year 2
Chair, Equality & Diversity Committee***



SOCIOLOGY

BSA A-LEVEL STUDENT CONFERENCE



Twenty Sociology students attended the annual A-Level student conference run by the British Sociological Association. The students heard from a wide range of academics outlining their research such as Dr Gemma Birkett on the need for an abolitionist approach to female prisons, and Prof Danny Dorling on the changing nature of childhood in the UK, and the increasing inequality between the wealthiest and poorest children in the UK today.

Luna D'Ambrosi - Year 1 Student:

"I enjoyed hearing the findings of Sociologists and the conclusions they came to from their research. It was inspiring to see how years of social analysis led to sociological findings that we learn about in our lessons. It helped me to see the applicable value of the subject to everyday life as the Sociologists, especially Anne Oakley, examined everyday life interactions showing how small actions have impacts on the whole of society."

Talk from Claire Clark

Our Year 1 and 2 students had a talk from Claire Clark who is a former Chief Superintendent with the Metropolitan Police. Claire spoke about her role as the head of the department responsible for planning the police response for all public order events in London which included protest, sporting events, festivals, concerts, and ceremonial events including overseeing the late Queen's funeral. The students found it very useful to learn some introductory criminological ideas and theories, and how considering criminology and related subjects at university could be beneficial to them.

Juvan Gowreeswaran – Acting Head of Sociology

ST. DOMINIC'S GOVERNING BODY MEMBERS DECEMBER 2025

Membership Category	Name
Chair of Governor	David Martin
Vice Chair of Governors	Anne O'Shea
Foundation Governor	Cáitlín Boyle
Foundation Governor	Sister Karen d'Artois
Foundation Governor	Noel Feeney
Foundation Governor	Patrick Freely
Foundation Governor	James O'Flynn
Foundation Governor	Keith Brown
Foundation Governor	Angela Inglese
Foundation Governor	Claire Clark
Foundation Governor	Paula Aubrey
Principal	Andrew Parkin
Staff Governor	Adrian Richardson
Staff Governor	Melisa Tupou
Parent Governor	Emmanuel Chukwuma
Parent Governor	Yvette Remedios
Co-opted Governor	Rosemary Laryea
Co-opted Governor	Mia Terra St Hill
Student Governor	Keira O'Malley
Student Governor	George Procter

If you would like to make contact with a member of the Board, please email stdoms@stdoms.ac.uk.

ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY

We are delighted to announce that the following students achieved 100% in both Attendance & Punctuality for this term. This shows a high level of commitment to their studies - well done!

Year 1 Students

Jessica Codrea
Ella Coker
Daniel Horan
Zayd Hussain
Sara Ieremie
Lance Mallari
Sania Martins
Nicole Materka
Hannah McCarthy
Xyza Mendoza
Denis Nedelcu
Roisin O'Brien
Jayna Patel
Daksh Vipulbhai Patel
Amalia Plamada
Alicja Szczepaniak

Year 2 Students

Razvan Bucur Regula
Jack Chappell
Yin Chung Andrew Chiang
Matthew Hayllar
Amy Luca
Dhara Mehta
Natalya Nichols
Rebecca Ryan
Aayesha Tellis-Nawaz



**WELL
DONE!**

STUDENT INFORMATION DATABASE AND PARENTPAY

What is SID?

SID (Student Information Database) is a secure web based (browser) access to student records, containing:

- Biographical & contact details
- Course enrolments & group memberships
- Timetable
- Attendance
- Qualifications record
- Exams – entries, timetables & results
- Reviews (Progress Check grades)

Students & parents have the same access.

To log into SID

- <https://sid.stdoms.ac.uk>
- Usernames were emailed to parent contacts
- Passwords were sent by SMS
- Best on Windows computers with the Edge web browser
- SID works on other devices and other browsers too, but sometimes with quirks and exceptions
- Safari on Apple IOS devices (prefix username with backslash)
- Bigger screens are easier to navigate than mobile phones
- Username format: e.g. p-25exampler
- Usernames are not case sensitive
- Passwords are case sensitive

We would encourage you to regularly log into SID. Remember your son / daughter uses SID on a regular basis, so should be experts if you need a hand!

If you have problems logging in:

- Try a different browser
- Try a different device
- Try prefixing the username with a backslash: e.g. \p-25exampler
- Send an email to sid@stdoms.ac.uk (including your name & SID username, the students name and details of the device, browser and problem).
- We will test your login and if there is an account problem we will fix it and ask you to try again.
- If you still have difficulties, we will ask that your son/daughter visits Student Services so we can try and provide further support.

ParentPay

ParentPay is the online system used over 11,000 schools and Colleges, to collect cashless payments for meals, trips, charity donations, governors fund, exam fees and music lessons.

Parents can make secure, 24/7 online payments via credit/debit card or bank transfer, and also provides the option to pay in cash at a Pay Point location. For ParentPay queries or login problems please email: parentpay@stdoms.ac.uk.

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND GOOD HEALTH AND HAPPINESS IN 2026



St Dominic's
Sixth Form College





St Dominic's
Sixth Form College

MAIN COLLEGE EMAIL stdoms@stdoms.ac.uk

ABSENCE attendance@stdoms.ac.uk

STUDENT SERVICES studentservices@stdoms.ac.uk