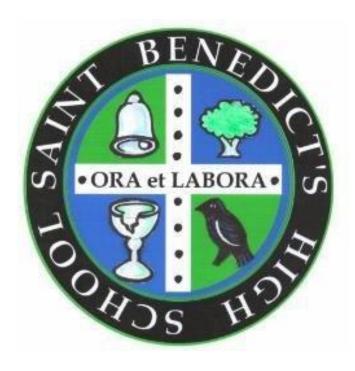
# St Benedict's High School



Newsletter

June 2019

# St. Benedict's



### Dear Parents/Carers

Welcome to our summer edition of St Benedict's News. I am delighted to be sharing with you a compilation of some of the many activities, successes and achievements of our young people this session.

Recent events have ensured a busy but exceptionally positive end of year for the school reflecting a great deal of hard work on the part of pupils and staff.

Our senior pupils have recently returned to school following our exam leave. Months of hard work and extra study sessions allowed our young people to prepare well for the exams and we now look forward to hearing of positive results at the start of August.

Already, our new S5 and S6 pupils have thrown themselves into the life and work of the senior school and S6 pupils in particular have taken on the leadership roles vacated by the departing S6 pupils.

Various whole school events have taken place in recent weeks including our Activities week and our Senior Prom. These events and many others are captured in this newsletter.

I hope you find the following information helpful and as ever we welcome your comments.

I wish you a relaxing and enjoyable holiday, whatever you and your family have planned, and I look forward to welcoming the whole school community back to school at the start of next session – Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> August.

Alan Taylor Head Teacher



# School uniform - Dressing for Excellence

Uniform continues to be extremely important to us in St Benedict's and we thank you for your continued support to ensure that our young people look their best.

The wearing of school uniform

- · Is invaluable in conveying a sense of community, wellbeing and purpose.
- Indicates a sense of pride in the school and helps pupils to form positive attitudes to the school and their school work.
- Protects children from the harmful effects of social distinction and competitive dressing.
- Promotes the school's identity in their community, with our immediate neighbours, local business and industry.
- Assists staff in the task of supervising pupils and keeping unwelcome visitors out of the school.

A reminder of our school uniform requirements.

St Benedict's High School's policy is that all of our pupils are required to wear the school uniform.

### The School Uniform consists of:

- A white school shirt/blouse, and school tie which is visible at all times
- Tailored black trousers or black skirt Leggings, jeans, denim and
  - tracksuits, are not acceptable under any circumstances.
- A school blazer with badge
- Comfortable footwear (black in colour).
- Plain black jumper or cardigan (optional).

Within this area I have identified two areas for improvement I would like to highlight and ask for your support when purchasing new items for your son/daughter.

- 1. Black school jumpers should be of an unbranded style that allows the school tie to be clearly seen (v neck).
- 2. Footwear, if not of a formal style should be <u>black</u> with <u>no</u> <u>coloured/white markings</u>. A large number of pupils are currently wearing "converse style" trainers. These are not part of our school policy guidelines and therefore will not be accepted from next session (2019-20).

It is in this area I require the support of you as a parent/carer to ensure our uniform standards are at a level that will promote the school's standing within the community.





@stbenedictsren

I draw your attention to our school's website **www.oraetlabora.co.uk** as an interesting and ongoing source of valuable information on events and achievements at the school, including our calendar for this session.

Our twitter feed is up and running again and is also a great source of information about the school. We now have over 1000 followers - you can follow us on **@stbenedictsren** 



## ATTENDANCE/TIMEKEEPING

We have been working hard this term to ensure that young people in St Benedict's High School continue to achieve and attain to their highest level. Regular attendance and punctuality at school are essential for this. Your support here as a parent/carer is crucial.

Please ensure that your child is only absent from school if they are genuinely unwell or there is a valid reason. Absences must be reported to the school office by 8.45am. If young people are absent on a regular basis or if they are late to class, this is detrimental to their education and learning. Please be aware that if your child's attendance or timekeeping falls below the expected standards we expect, we have a duty of care to inform you and to follow Renfrewshire Council procedures.

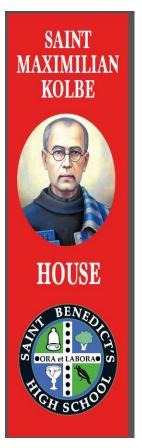


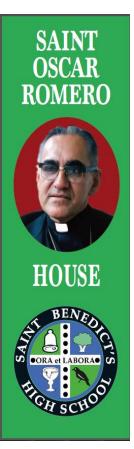
# **House System**

In St Benedict's we are proud of the pastoral care and support that we provide for our young people. To further strengthen and build on this we are introducing a House system starting from next session. We want the house system to reflect the vision and values of our school community and the pupils will now belong to one of the following houses.









Pastoral Care Mrs G O'Neill

Pastoral Care Mrs N Shearer

Pastoral Care Mr D McGrane

Pastoral Care Mr G Harvey

# News from across the school.....

There has been lots going on in recent months. This is what makes St Benedict's High such a great school and it is experiences such as these, which enable our young people to develop their skills for life, learning and work.

## Faith Development – Caritas

Success for twelve S6 students who have gained the Caritas Award this year having completed 40 hours of service including hours in the school and hours in faith based community in the local catchment areas.







## **Malawi Partnership**

Our Malawi partnership has played a huge part in my time at St Benedict's. I've had the privilege of going to Malawi in 2017, 2018 and I am going again this June.

I have been interested in the school's Malawi partnership since first year but I never thought that I would be able to go and visit St Patricks. It also never occurred to me how much the Malawi partnership would impact my life, even after I've left school.

By getting involved in our partnership, I have formed lifelong bonds with the students of St Patrick's and the Rector, Father Sam, of the school. This partnership is more like a family and being able to witness the joy and warmth of a country first hand, and not just through stories and photographs is incredible.





In Malawi, we attend mass every morning and evening prayer at night, we take part in the classes as well as teaching in the classrooms alongside the teachers that accompany us on the trip. We also visit the local primary school and spend a lot of time at St Magdalena's.

Our partnership includes an exchange visit. This meant that 8 students from St Patrick's got to visit Scotland along with the Rector, Fr. Sam and Vicar General, Fr. Andrew. I was lucky enough to be one of the host families which meant I was able to welcome one of the boys, Alfred, into my home and he stayed with me for 1 week. Having Alfred stay with my family was an amazing experience and one that I will never forget.

Lara McGarry S6



# **Exchange Student Visit**

We recently welcomed an exchange student Pablo Nistal from Colegio de la Inmaculada, a Catholic school in Gijón, Asturias, Spain.

Pablo visited St. Benedict's for three weeks of term and enjoyed the warm welcome he received across the school.





# **English and Modern Languages**



@sbhslanguage

Dear parents and carers,

What follows is a brief snapshot of the various learning experiences we have offered to our young people in the past several months. Hopefully when reading the next several pages, you are as struck by the talent, perseverance and sheer hard work that our students have invested in their time with the Faculty of Languages as I have been since taking up post. We have also included details of some new opportunities for wider achievement launching next session, and look forward to working with you and your children to continue to ensure that excellent experiences punctuate their time with us.

I hope that, when reading the newsletter, you share the sense of pride that we feel towards our learners' achievements. Best Regards,

Christopher McKee Faculty Head of English and Modern Languages

# THE POETRY ESCAPE YOUNG WRITERS COMPETITION



Miss McFadyen was so impressed with the standard of her S1 class' work on writing their own poems that she has entered them into the annual *Young Writers* competition: "The Poetry Escape." This is a national event which rewards impressive creative writing entries by publishing them in a special collection that is issued to all winners. We look forward to hearing of, and sharing in, our learners' successes.

### SATURDAY SCHOOLS

This year, we trialled Saturday schools for our National 5 and Higher students in both English and Spanish. To say the turn-out was phenomenal would be quite the understatement. Indeed, despite the rain and sleet providing plenty of encouragement to stay inside, huge numbers of our young people devoted their Saturdays to getting some additional support in preparation for their final exams. We look forward to August when our young people will be rewarded for investing such time and effort through their SQA certificates — best of luck!



# SUPPORTED STUDY AND EASTER SCHOOL

As well as the Saturday sessions, the faculty offered regular supported study sessions throughout the year which were well-attended by pupils. We will continue to offer supported study as part of our learning provision and continue to encourage all learners to take advantage of this extra opportunity for support.



### **PUBLIC SPEAKING AND DEBATING**

Next session, we will be organising the (re)introduction of public speaking and debating in St. Benedict's, with Miss McFadyen kindly liaising with the Association of Speakers' Clubs to arrange a competition for our S3 learners. Alongside this competition, there will be less formal opportunities for pupils of all ages to take part. Please direct any students who wish to take advantage of this outstanding opportunity to speak to Miss McFadyen in the first instance.



### LIBRARY IMPROVEMENT TEAM

A selection of our new S2 pupils have been working very closely with our school librarian, Miss Bortolato, as well as wider representatives from Renfrewshire Council to generate a plan for strengthening our school library. The team have had meetings with council staff and have been directly involved in visits to other establishments in the authority to promote reading cultures and improve literacy. We look forward to providing further updates on the work of the team as we move into the next session.



#### **S2 FANTASTIC BEASTS**

Mrs. Kelly's S2 class relished in the opportunity to study J.K. Rowling's novel Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them – the outcome of which was to exercise some creativity and generate a fantastic beast of their own. A selection of the finalised creations are shown to the right – I'm sure you would agree that they live up to their title.





### **PARENTS IN PARTNERSHIP EVENTS**

We have contributed extensively to our school's Parents in Partnership programme in the last session. In February, Mr. McKee led a group of parents of S1 students through how to improve pupils' writing skills.

This was supplemented by Mrs. Kelly's session with parents of current P7 pupils last month, where parents were given a taster of learning and teaching in the English lessons.



### **MULTI-LINGUAL DEBATE**

A number of our S5/6 linguists were invited to take part in the prestigious annual multi-lingual debate at Heriot Watt University in March of this year. Students were able to witness the real-world application of language learning through immersion in a debate, before being given access to the facilities on offer at the university to supplement the study of languages. A fantastic day was had by all and we hope that the experience provided further motivation to go the extra mile in preparation for those all-important SQA examinations.

### MATT OLDFIELD AUTHOR VISIT

Many of our S1 learners who have expressed an interest in sporting literature were given the chance to attend a workshop with the author of the popular Football Heroes series, Matt Oldfield, on 30<sup>th</sup> April. Mr. Oldfield delivered an interactive presentation before responding to some (rather entertaining) questions from the floor – some of which were only loosely related to football itself.





### **CONTINENTAL BREAKFASTS**

Many of our S2 students last session were provided with the opportunity to experience the culture of different countries via "continental breakfasts" in the Modern Languages side of the faculty. Pupils were exposed to a variety of, shall we say, unusual appetisers — all of which broadened their wider understanding of cultures other than their own. The blue cheese was a particular highlight for some!

### **MULTIMEDIA IN LANGUAGES**

Our recent S3 cohort completed their entitlement to language learning through an innovative exploration of how language is used in a multi-media context, culminating in the study of the Spanish film La Cuarta Planta. It is hoped that the close study of a media text, similar to how they would experience such texts in their English classes, has further developed young people's skills in understanding, analysing and evaluating – as well as shown them a different side to language learning.





### **CONNECT 4 WORLD TOURNAMENT**

Congratulations to 1.2 whose solo presentations into different countries were rewarded with participation in the "Inter-continental Connect 4 Tournament". Particular congratulations to our world champion, Conan Rooney!

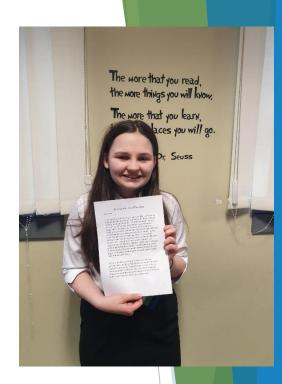
### ADVANCED HIGHER POETS

Students from our Advanced Higher cohort this year have submitted pieces of writing for consideration as part of the Christopher Tower Poetry Competition, which this year took its inspiration from the word "underwater". It is incredibly encouraging to note how enthusiastically and conscientiously our learners took up the challenge and submitted their own poems, and we look forward to hearing of their success in due course.



On the 22nd of February, Miss McFadyen's S3 pupils had the exciting opportunity to be Film Critics for the day at Showcase Cinema, Linwood. Pupils went to see 'The Kid Who Would be King', after which they wrote a detailed review critiquing the film. One review, which was written by Kate Lennon, was particularly outstanding! The class thoroughly enjoyed the film and were grateful for the unique experience!





### **ACTIVITIES DAY**

The end of the previous timetable was signalled by the faculty's to the school's activities programme: a day at ten-pin bowling, followed by lunch at Frankie and Benny's. A fantastic time was had by all, and we look forward to continuing to provide such opportunities for our learners in the near future.



# **Faculty of Technologies**



For the latest news from the Technologies Faculty follow us on Twitter...

@st\_bensbusiness
@StBensComputing
@StBenedictTech

**Business Education** 

**Computing Science** 

# <u>Business Education - Ethical Product</u> <u>Challenge</u>

S2 pupils in Business Education were set a challenge this term. Working in groups, pupils had to suggest a new product or improve an existing product with an emphasis on it being ethical. Each group presented their ideas to their classes and teacher. From this the teacher selected a winning group from each class who took part in a Grand Final with 4 judges. All pupils represented their classes well and presented their ideas with confidence. Throughout this challenge pupils developed their communication, decision making, presentation and IT skills and the judges had a difficult decision to make. After much deliberation Lewis McFadden and Mark McKay were selected for their product "Brookies" which is a cookie and brownie combined (using Fairtrade ingredients). Congratulations to the winners but also to all pupils for their participation throughout this challenge. Well done!



# **Mathematics Department**

# **Celebrating Success**

On 30<sup>th</sup> April over 100 S1 and S2 pupils took part in the annual UKMT Junior Maths Challenge. The pupils involved were a credit to the school and tackled a range of challenging maths problems such as:

13. In how many different ways can you spell out JMC, starting at the centre, and moving to the next letter in a neighbouring square – horizontally, vertically, or diagonally – each time?

A 8

B 16

C 24

D 25

E 32

C	C	C	C	C
C	M	M	M	C
С	M	J	M	C
C	M	M	M	C
C	C	C	C	C

In S1 our award winners were Lucy Quinn, Kaitlynn Moran, Eve Muir and Alex Stasak achieving Bronze awards. Ava Scott was awarded the best in the year and achieved a Silver award.



In S2 Anthony Love, Ryan Colligan, Adam Darmoul, Alyssa Murray, Kian Dupreez, Jessica Hope and Ciara Black achieved Bronze awards. Both Sarah Hailey and Jack Morton achieved Silver awards with Jack achieving the best in year.



Congratulations to all on your magnificent achievements!

# **Physical Education Department**

**Sporting Success** 

There has been lots going on both within the PE curriculum and through extra curricular teams and events this term:

### Netball

St Benedict's Netball team has built on last year's achievements at the Renfrewshire Summer Tournament. We have played friendly matches throughout the year against Johnstone High and Linwood High. This session, the S3 and a S2/1 team have competed in the Renfrewshire Plate Competition. In March, the S2/1 team won the Renfrewshire Cup Tournament.

Netball training is on every Thursday lunchtime in the games hall. This session over 40 pupils have participated. All pupils are welcome to attend training although only girls can compete.





Congratulations to Mr Millar's senior volleyball team who won the Renfrewshire Senior Volleyball Championships.

# **Senior Football Team**

The senior football team got to the 'Europa league final' and lost 3-2 in the last minute. Well done to the fantastic effort, teamwork and positive attitude throughout the season which highlighted our school ethos. Well done to Mr Cook for coaching the team this session.





Mrs McCartney's Sportsleaders organised and led the St Benedict's Cross Country Championship, gaining valuable leadership experience. Well done to all the runners who participated.

The Sportsleaders also helped officiate when St Benedict's hosted the Renfrewshire Junior Basketball festival in February. Mr McGeady's team performed well whilst gaining new skills and experiences.







St Benedict's Senior Girls competed at the Active Schools Dance competition organised by Lynsey Dawson of Active Schools. Also, partnership working with Ydance resulted in pupils from S1-S4 participating in street and hip hop dance lessons in core PE.

Mr Cook's football team did well to reach the Renfrew and East Renfrewshire Senior Cup Final where they were unlucky to lose 3-2 in the last minute.

Mr McGinty's S2 football team and Mr Hardie's S4 team both reached the 2nd round of the Renfrew and East Renfrewshire League Cup competition



Well done to Jay Keegan in S1 who competed at the SDS para sports event at Ravenscraig.

# **Social Subjects**

# Gavin Stewart – Scottish Youth Parliament (SYP) member for Renfrewshire south Interview

After his success in the recent Scottish Youth Parliament election (SYP) Gavin sat down for an interview in his own school, St Benedict's, and gave an open and impressive insight in to his political journey so far.

Gavin enjoyed telling me he has been politically active since the 2014 referendum when he was 10 years old. Young people in Scotland were at the forefront of his desire to run for the SYP and he wants to increase political awareness among them. When asked about the biggest challenge to Modern Democracy, it is this youth disengagement which Gavin identified and he has already begun thinking of ways to solve this.

Knowing that it was many of his peers who helped him gain this success Gavin feels obliged to make change for them. However he is well aware his remit extends beyond just Renfrewshire South and talked of Scotland as a collective.

As this is a keen passion of Gavin's both academically and in his spare time he suggested it is a route he can see himself going down in the future, potentially involving law and/or politics.

Mr Cook





# **Gathering the Voices**

In February we were very privileged to host the Gathering the Voices exhibition. The Gathering the Voices project has collated oral testimony from men and women who sought sanctuary in Scotland to escape the racism of Nazi-dominated Europe. Thank you to Hilary and Steven Anson for their moving talk they gave to our junior school.





# International Women's Day

To celebrate international women's day on the 8<sup>th</sup> March History classes made a beautiful banner and posters for the street area. Well done to all!

# **Dynamic Earth**

We had an amazing trip to Dynamic Earth, Edinburgh in February. We travelled back in time to experience the forces that shaped our planet, journeyed through a glacier and took a 4D virtual adventure around the world! Well done everyone involved.



# **MSP Visit**

In March our S3 modern studies class met the MSP for Renfrewshire South, Tom Arthur. They enjoyed a fun morning discussing life as an MSP and asked lots of hard questions about politics!



# **Professor Iain Stewart Talk**

In March a group of our senior pupils attended a talk from Professor Iain Stewart on the subject of oil. Professor Stewart traced the geological and technological tipping points that transformed oil from an unwanted waste product into a substance on which our modern world completely relies. The presentation was very inspirational and we even got a rubber duck or two signed! Thanks to the Royal Scottish Geographical Society for putting on the event!



## **Eco Committee**

This year, a small group of responsible S1 pupils decided to establish an eco-committee in St Benedict's. We are taking steps to becoming a sustainable, environmentally and eco-friendly community and taking positive action to protect and preserve our planet. Already we have designed our school eco-committee logo, been involved in regular litter picking around the school and set ourselves targets for the following year. Next year our plan is to introduce recycling bins in the street area and paper bins in every classroom, which will be emptied and managed by pupils of all year groups. Pupils of the eco-committee also aim to take the lead in carrying out the Environmental Review and to ensure that everyone in the school community is represented in the decision-making process (as far as possible). These steps will set the foundations for us to become a fully-fledged Eco-School and achieve our green flag award. Becoming a member of the eco-committee is a fantastic opportunity to lead change in your school and to have a positive impact on your community. If you are interested in joining us then put your name forward to Miss Scouller (Social Subjects).



### **SQA**

Our senior pupils worked very hard this term sitting prelims to prepare for SQA exams in May and sitting SQA assignments. Well done to everyone who attended supported study, Easter school and who put in the many hours of studying!

### Arran and Iceland

We are running a number of exciting trips next session: Arran in September and Iceland in June 2020. Fundraising efforts continue and we thank all those that have helped us so far!



# **World Environment Day**

Along with Expressive Arts and Science we welcomed the Primary 6 pupils from our associate primaries to help raise awareness about single use plastic. Pupils enjoyed workshops in art, science and social subjects as well learning about changes they could make in their own home.

# Art and Design ©StBenedictsArt

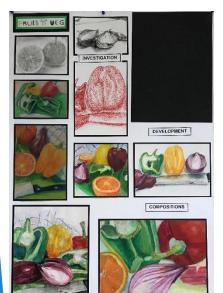
Some excellent work by pupils this year. Here are some examples of work from S1 to Higher.

**Art Club** will continue next year. We would love to see some new members so keep your eyes open for a start date in August.

### **SQA Folios**

After lots of hard work pupils finally finished their SQA folios. Pupils all worked so hard and as a result there is some amazing work. Well Done everyone. We are looking forward to some fantastic results in August.











# Science

Congratulations to Ayesha Gunn S5 who will be one of 100 pupils from schools across Scotland attending the one-week residential course at the University of Strathclyde in June 2019.

Ayesha will face a series of engineering and scientific challenges, lectures, labs and workshops all on a space theme. Not only is this course delivered by leading academics and researchers, but it is also supported by NASA astronauts and engineers.

With NASA's InSight mission currently exploring the surface of Mars and Scotland preparing its own 'Spaceport' and ongoing developments in low-orbit travel, Space, long-regarded as the 'final frontier', is back in the headlines.

The objectives of the Space School are simple:

- Provide inspiration, increase motivation and raise aspirations of young people in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM)
- Encourage more students to study STEM courses at University
- Promote the wide range of career opportunities in Engineering and Technology
- Increase self-confidence through the development of high-quality communication, team-building and problem-solving skills

### Well done Ayesha!









# **Primary Visits**

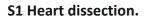
Our soon to be new S1, enjoying their chemical reactions lesson today.





# **Practical Highlights**

The science departments practical highlights this session.





# Van De Graaff practical

Some of our physicists learning the physics behind the Van De Graaff.



# **Crazy Chemical Reactions**

S2 learning about different chemical reactions.





# **Scientist of the Month Reward Trip**

Our S1 & 2 Scientists of the Month for this term are at the cinema enjoying their reward trip.



### **STEM**

Congratulations to Eilidh Taggart who was successful in her application to the weeklong Engineering the Future for Girls course. Eilidh is one of only 100 pupils selected for this opportunity. Engineering the Future for Girls, hosted by the Faculty of Engineering in the University of Strathclyde is designed to engage girls in a wide range of engineering challenges that will inspire them to become the next generation of engineers.

Mr Andrew and our S6 STEM Ambassadors visited our associated Primary schools to deliver STEM activities to P6 and P7 classes. Pupils made lava lamps to investigate how they work and learned about the signs that a chemical reaction has taken place.







As a result of their hard work delivering these sessions and supporting younger pupils at St Benedict's, seven S6 pupils successfully completed their STEM Ambassador training. The pupils are now qualified to assist in the delivery of activities across the country. We look forward to inviting them back to support future STEM activities in school. Congratulations to Chelsea McWilliams, Alanna Templeton, Rian Meighan, Luke Wishart, Katie Stewart, Louise O'Brien and Abbie McLardie.



A group of S2 pupils recently attended the SmartSTEM Active Conference at the University of the West of Scotland. The pupils participated in a number of activities designed to show them how STEM subjects are important in a vast number of different careers.

Pupils from our Columba Base recently attended a Salter's Festival of Chemistry at Strathclyde University. This event was specially organised to support pupils in accessing STEM activities outside the school setting.

# Health and Wellbeing

Our S2 pupils joined teachers to complete a "Walk A Mile" event to raise awareness of Mental Health and to challenge mental health stigma and discrimination.





S5 and S6 Peer Educators, delivered a 50 minute Mental Health presentation to all our S1 and S2 SE classes.



Breakfast Club runs every Thursday! Thanks to Kate Robertson who sets up most of it whilst it is still dark outside!





Our Hearty Lives young leaders led 120 P7's through a whole morning of activities focused on mental health





The Health and Wellbeing Hub is open every day. A typical week in the Hub:

- Mon S1-S2 Peer Educator Choice
- Tue S3-S4 Pool and Music
- Wed S5-S6 Hot drinks cafe
- Thu S1/S2 Movie
- Fri S1-S6 Mindfulness



## **Employability**

It's been a busy session for our pupils! <u>Some</u> of the Employability highlights include:

We now have a number of S3 pupils trained as My World of Work Ambassadors. These pupils will assist in S1/S2 Social Education classes to promote the careers service My WOW, give information at parents evenings and work with P6/7 pupils during transition days.







Two of our S4 pupils have attended the "Greenpower" course one day each week at West College Scotland. Pupils work in teams to build a go-kart and this provides them with various skills such as communication, decision making, teamwork and practical skills which will hopefully help them in their future careers. Once built the teams got to race their Go Karts and although our team didn't win first place they greatly benefited and enjoyed this experience.

We held a very successful Modern Apprenticeship Event in February which was attended by a number of employers from various industries. This allowed pupils to find out more about this career pathway, get advice from employers and find out more about the varied career opportunities which exist. Many thanks to all employers who supported this event.





# **Employability**



We arranged for the Arnold Clark interactive van to visit the school and a number of pupils got to try "hands on" activities which reflected the skills required for various Modern Apprenticeship roles with the organisation.

A number of our senior pupils have successfully secured places at colleges and universities while some have conditional offers and are waiting for their results. A few pupils have gained employment and gone straight to the world of work. Finally, we have had pupils gain Modern Apprenticeships in various industries including a Trainee Buyer, Mechanic with Malcolms, Trainee with Porsche and MA in Digital Media. We wish all our school leavers every success in their futures — no matter which pathway they choose to follow. Good luck!

# **Work Experience**

All S4 pupils will be offered the opportunity of work experience from Monday 23 September – Thursday 26 September 2019. More information will follow however pupils should be giving some consideration as to where they would like to go on their placement. Some opportunities will be available through the Gateway system however the majority of pupils will need to find their own placement (Mrs Methven will coordinate work experience and assist pupils).

Finally, a reminder that pupils should check the pupil bulletin on the school website regularly for career and employment information. Also, our Employability twitter page is updated regularly **@StBenedictsCareers** 

## Skills Development Scotland – Careers Service Delivery

From the beginning of term, the **Careers Adviser** and **Work Coach** have continued to work with senior pupils helping them to develop their career management skills and supporting them with their career planning, through 1:1 meetings and group sessions. There has also been input with S3 pupils through group work sessions to raise awareness of Career Management Skills.

Since January, a big focus of our work has been helping pupils to prepare for college and apprenticeship applications and interviews. A significant number of pupils have been successful in securing either firm offers or conditional offers.

In February, members of the **Skills Development Scotland Post School Team** were in school to attend the Modern Apprenticeship event and to advise pupils of the support that is offered when they leave school. In addition to this, the **Post School Careers Adviser** came into school to meet with a group of pupils to explain in more detail the services that are available to support them to find employment, apprenticeships, college courses or training courses.

## Post school support

Once pupils leave school they will be followed up by an SDS Adviser; pupils can also contact SDS to arrange an appointment to speak to a Careers Adviser on a one to one basis. Individuals will meet with the Careers Adviser either in the SDS Paisley office which is in the Russell Institute in Causeyside Street or in the Johnstone Job Centre.

# To arrange an appointment, telephone 0141 849 0942 or email: paisley@sds.co.uk

### SDS Exam Results Helpline: 0808 100 8000

Each year SDS runs an Exam Results Helpline, the helpline opens on 6 August, and SDS Careers Advisers will be supporting candidates to explore their options until Wednesday 12 August

### **Useful websites**

www.myworldofwork..co.uk www.myworldofwork.co.uk/parents www.mykidscareer.com www.digitalworld.net



Janet Craig, Careers Officer

# St Benedict's High School is a GROWTH MINDSET SCHOOL.

In St Benedict's we are growing MINDSETS FOR SUCCESS.

The concept of a growth mindset was developed by psychologist Carol Dweck and popularised in her book, *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*. In recent years, schools, educators, businesses and sports people have used this theory to improve their performance.

Our message is...MINDSET MATTERS!



We know that individuals with a *GROWTH MINDSET* perform better and are more successful.

Our 'Guide to Growth Mindset' was published at the start of this year and has been issued to parents and carers at our parents and information evenings.

An electronic copy of this guide will be available on the school's website.

The messages we have been working on which will help our pupils and staff develop a Growth Mindset are :

- Use language which encourages growth, hard work, perseverance and determination.
- Use the power of ... 'YET'.
- Encourage energetic, positive self-talk
- Provide helpful, positive support and make plans of how your child can improve
- Recognise there may be setbacks and failures...this is an opportunity to reflect and grow



### **Growth Mindset Partnership Programme**

This coming year 2019/20, staff, pupils and parents at St Benedict's will begin working in partnership with Growth Mindset expert, Dr John Paul Fitzpatrick who will be delivering workshops, peer-led training, coaching and mentoring across our school community.

"For us, growth mindset can and does deliver brave and bright futures. At TeachMindset we're working with schools to dismantle fixed mindsets and barriers which prevent ongoing learning."

"With our work we're aiming high in terms of improving exam passes and positive destinations...we support young people to develop lifelong resilience and emotional strength. We want every child to be able to take (and offer) constructive critique and bounce back unscathed."



We are really excited to continue our journey of growing MINDSETS FOR SUCCESS at St Benedict's High School.



# **Learning & Teaching in St Benedict's High School**

Our aim is to ensure the highest quality of learning and teaching in St Benedict's High School. This is the key to success for all our pupils. We have introduced some exciting new initiatives to support all our learners.

This session we introduced a learning and teaching 'Focus of the Month'.

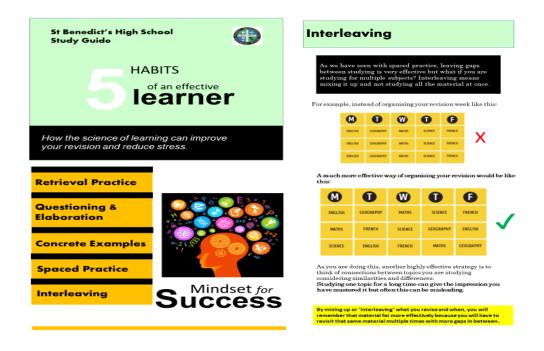
Each focus has a particular emphasis on learning and teaching strategies which help pupils to learn best and maximise their potential. We have identified the most effective ways for our pupils to learn and study.



There are posters displayed in every classroom and in the communal areas, and all staff and pupils are encouraged to explore these strategies and make them a focus within their lessons.



Ahead of the prelim exams, all senior phase pupils, S4,5&6, were issued with the **St Benedict's Study Guide.** This is a practical guide which supports pupils by explaining the best study techniques and showing how to use and include them in their study routine.



Parents and carers can access an electronic copy of the study guide on our school's website by clicking on the link on the article 'Effective Study Skills'.

A presentation will also show and explain these 5 strategies in the street area during parents' evenings.



# **Raising Attainment**

### **Seminars**

Following the success and very positive feedback from our S5 Raising Attainment Seminar, our S4 received a similar programme of support in February. Pupils participated in a series of workshops and presentations designed to increase study skills, confidence, resilience and aspiration. Workshops included Team Building, Exam Preparation and Health & Wellbeing.

## **Supported Study**

To enhance the ongoing excellent learning and teaching which goes on in the classroom, a programme of fully funded tutorial classes were delivered at the end of each school day and at weekends. Students benefitted from this additional support and welcomed the opportunity to deepen their learning by working in smaller class settings with subject specialists. Initial feedback from those students who participated has been overwhelmingly positive and I would be very keen to see even more pupils take advantage of these excellent opportunities in session 2019-2020.

### Easter School

April saw further support provided to senior students on the cusp of SQA examinations in the form of our hugely successful Easter School. Students attended a wide range of subjects as well as taking advantage of a quiet, industrious environment for study. St Benedict's also provided a variety of very popular lunches, which in turn encouraged even greater participation!



### **BGE Homework Club**

Our commitment to excellence and equity in the Broad General Education (S1-S3) is evidenced through our very well attended Homework Club. Parents will already know of the importance we place on learning outside of the classroom through their engagement with the Show My Homework app. Our Homework Club provides young people with a learning environment where they are both supported and challenged to reach their potential. This assistance takes the form of dedicated staff members and particularly talented and highly committed senior students who, in keeping with the values of St Benedict's, give up their own time to help and be role models for our young pupils. These senior students are a credit to our school and those they help are fulsome in their praise of their older peers. Whilst the priority of the homework group is raising attainment, there can be no denying the positive nurturing impact senior and junior pupils working together has on the ethos of our Catholic school.

The ongoing work to raise attainment in the school has led to very positive outcomes and we are confident that as we move into session 2019-2020, all staff and pupils alike will continue to build on this success. Here at St Benedict's we look forward to starting the new session feeling motivated, enthused and determined to reach our full potential.



### PARENT COUNCIL NEWS

St Benedict's High School has an active and thriving Parent Council which is here to represent the views of all parents/carers at the school. We support the work of the school by

- Providing a voice for parents on issues that are important to them and their children.
- Advising the school on its policies.
- Being involved in the appointment of senior staff.
- Organising social and fundraising events.
- Ensuring all parents are listened to and understand what the Parent Council does.
- Promoting contact between all parents and the rest of the school community.
- Discussing any key areas of interest to parents.

### **Annual General Meeting**

We are holding our AGM on Monday 19 August and Michael Young (Chairperson) and all members of the Parent Council would like to invite parents/carers to attend. The meeting is open to everyone so feel free to come along on the night.

We are always looking for new members so if you are interested in joining the parent council, please contact Mr Taylor.



# Staff Retiring in June 2019

We have 3 valued member of staff retiring at the end of June:

### Mrs F Donachie - Chemistry Teacher

Mrs Donachie started teaching in St Cuthbert's in January 1991 and moved to St Benedict's when it opened in 2006. She is happy to retire after 36 years of teaching and to devote her time to family, friends and new adventures

'I wish all present and past pupils well' Mrs Donachie

### Mr K Cassidy - PT Columba Base

Mr Cassidy joined St Cuthbert's for its final year before joining St Benedict's when it opened in 2006, where he joined the Columba Base. He became Principal Teacher in 2014 and has loved every minute, which would not have been possible without a great team.

'Looking forward to retirement – will miss you all!' Mr Cassidy

### Mr G McDonald –Technician (Technical Dept)

Gordon started work as a technician briefly in St Brendan's and St Cuthbert's. Gordon came to St Benedict's when it was a brand new school. He came in to a modern workshop and has enjoyed working with all the staff and pupils over the years.

'I will miss the lentil soup served from the canteen every day!' Mr McDonald

# .....and finally

"S2 pupil Nikki Lavery cut her hair in aid of cancer research and St Vincent's hospice. Her hair was used to make wigs for those affected by cancer. We are all very proud." Well done Nikki!!



# **Dates for your Diary**

Thursday 20 June

Friday 28 June

**Tuesday 6 August** 

**Tuesday 13 August** 

Wednesday 14 August

**Thursday 15 August** 

**Monday 19 August** 

**Sports Championships** 

**School Closes for Summer** 

**SQA** Results day

**Teachers Inservice Day** 

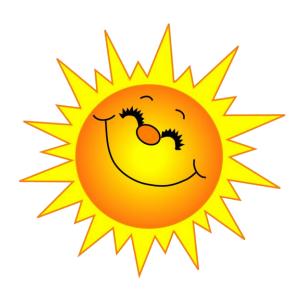
**Teachers Inservice Day** 

Pupils return to school

Parent Council AGM (all

welcome)

# Have a great summer!!



### **FEEDBACK**

We welcome any feedback on the content of the Newsletter or indeed any other aspect of the work of the School. If you wish to make an electronic reply please do so through the school email address:

Durailla Nama
Pupil's Name:
Year Group:
Comment:
Comment.

stbenedictshighenquiries@renfrewshire.gov.uk



Parent's Signature.....

Parents Name (please Print):.....