



St. Benedict's High School

NEWSLETTER

Summer 2022



Follow us on Twitter: [@stbenedictsren](https://twitter.com/stbenedictsren)



Dear Parents/Carers

Welcome to our Summer Edition of St Benedict's News. I am delighted to be sharing a compilation of some of the many activities, successes and achievements of our young people.

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 our young people and staff.

Our senior pupils have recently returned to school following the SQA 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 the positive results at the start of August.

Our new S5 and S6 pupils have already thrown themselves into the life and work of the senior school. S6 pupils have now taken on the leadership roles vacated by the departing pupils.

Various whole school events have taken place in recent weeks including our House group celebrations, sports day and the S6 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 – Tuesday 16th August.

Alan Taylor

Alan Taylor
Head Teacher





Our Improvement Journey

St. Benedict's High School continues to go from strength to strength in a number of areas.

We recently hit the headlines in the Times Newspaper League Table. This recognised our significant improvements in attainment over the past four years.

Since 2018, we have moved from position 291 to 76 in the Scottish High School League Table; this puts us in the top 25% of schools in Scotland.

We are all delighted and will continue to work to sustain this progress.



"... St. Benedict's High School is among the most improved schools in Scotland ..."

Mark McLaughlin, Politics and Education Correspondent at The Times Scotland.

THE  TIMES

Our recent questionnaire feedback from pupils, staff and parents was overwhelmingly positive. Thank you for contributing to this and for your ongoing support for the school.

Full details can be viewed at [PARENTS/CARERS FEEDBACK](#) and [PUPIL FEEDBACK](#).



Pupil Leadership

Head Boy and Head Girl



Head Boy
Oliver Turley

Head Girl
Louise Parsons

Depute Team



Depute Head Boys
Junior Okorodudu and Cian Thomson

Depute Head Girls
Jessica Toland, Alyssa Murray
and Gloria Okungbowa



School Uniform – Dressing for Excellence

Uniform is an important part of our school identity. It reinforces who we are as a community and allows students to feel a sense of pride in their school. It also helps prepare pupils for life after school where many will have to dress smartly for work.

Over the past four sessions, there have been **significant improvements** in our standard of uniform. An increasing number of pupils are now wearing blazers and I am delighted to report that over 95% of pupils are now wearing all black footwear. **A big thank you to you as parents/carers for supporting this.**

Our main driving force for striving towards 100% of pupils wearing black shoes is to ensure equity for all. No pupil or parent should feel pressured to wear/buy an expensive pair of “converse style” trainers. This was also highlighted by our young people through our pupil voice.

Our improved standards of uniform coincides with our increasing pattern of attainment.

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.

St Benedict's High School's uniform policy is that all of our young people 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. S4, S5 and S6 will wear the Senior tie.
- 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). **No Converse style trainers unless fully black in colour.**
- Plain black jumper or cardigan (optional). Black school jumpers should be of an unbranded style that allows the school tie to be clearly seen (v-neck). **Hoodies are not allowed.**





Chaplaincy

Fr. Andrew Coleman R.I.P.

It is with great sadness that we learned of the passing of Fr. Andrew Coleman, our former School Chaplain. We thank God for his priestly service and pray for the happy repose of his soul.

May he rest in peace.



Lenten Station Mass

In March, we were overjoyed to be able to join with our parish communities, including our cluster primaries, for a Lenten Station Mass with Bishop John Keenan in St. Aidan's Church.



Caritas

The Pope Benedict XVI Caritas Award encourages and promotes the ongoing faith journey of young people, inviting them to respond to God's call of love. It supports and celebrates the faith witness which young people give within their communities.

This year, St. Benedict's had a great number of successful candidates, giving over thirty hours of service to their school and faith communities, whilst taking the time to reflect upon how their faith witness impacted their relationship with God. Our young people undertook a variety of activities including serving refreshments after Mass, sanitising churches, helping younger pupils in school and running various charitable activities like the Santa Dash.

Well done to everyone who took part in Caritas this year, your witness and dedication has been inspirational.



Thanksgiving Mass

We were delighted to be able to join together a school community in St. Conval's Church for Mass, giving thanks for this past academic year. Many thanks to Canon Michael McMahon and Mgr. John Tormey for celebrating the Mass, to the parish community of St. Conval's for hosting us, to our readers, musicians, choir and everyone present who so prayerfully and reverently marked the end of the school year.



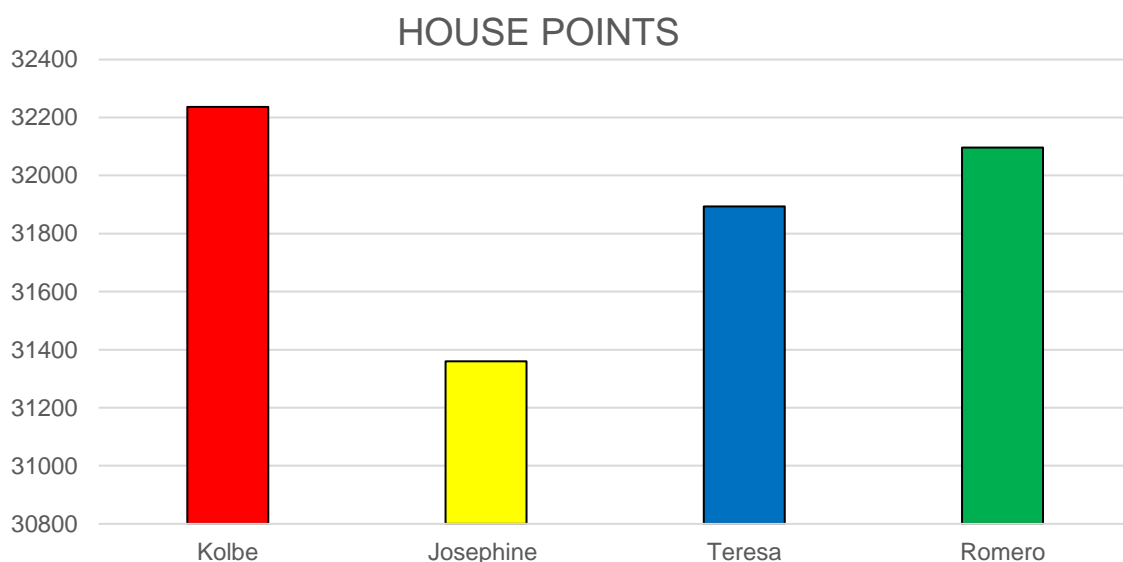


House System

Our House System continues to be a success with pupils gaining the highest number of points since we started in 2019. Our young people are really enjoying participating and they are benefitting from this day to day.

This year's winner was **St. Maximilian Kolbe House**. Well done!

The winning house enjoyed an afternoon of fun as a reward.



We must congratulate all of our young people across the four house groups for their positive involvement and enthusiasm this session.

Now for some recent news across the individual House Groups.



News from St. Maximilian Kolbe's House

The last term has been very busy for Kolbe House. Following our success as the highest scoring House, our S1, S2 and S3 classes had a fun period with some slips and slides on the inflatable course. Our House assembly saw us celebrate the House Heroes and introduce the House to the importance of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Discussing the situation in Ukraine, we focused on Articles 19 and 20 relating to Government protection of children and family separation. 1.2 also took the opportunity to look at Article 7, which relates to the right to have a name and identity, with Mariam bringing in some games and articles from Nigeria.



In terms of personal achievements, Andrew in 2.2 was very successful in competitive Irish dance in Dublin, coming 4th in the World. Pictured are the sash and medal he won.



Logan in 2.2 achieved a Saltire Award for fifty hours of volunteering as a ball attendant at St. Mirren, very well done!



News from St. Teresa's House



It's not about **how much** you do,
but **how much love** you put into
what you do that **counts**.

- Mother Teresa

What a year it's been!

St. Teresa's House would like to thank our outgoing Senior House Captains. Stuart and Abbie have been a great support to our house group this year and we wish them every success at university. Big shoes to fill for our new S6 pupils!



Our S1 and S2 pupils have made a fantastic contribution to the school this year. Callum Brady (S1) participating in not one but two Kiltwalks this year (Glasgow and Aberdeen), helping to raise over £1500 for Accord Hospice. Callum spent months training for these and we are all very proud of his achievements. Have a look at Callum's medals!



Well done to James Wheeler who received his President's Badge and his Queen's Badge at the Boys Brigade. A fantastic achievement!



Home Economics Chef of the Week



S1 Scientist of the Week



S2 Scientist of the Week





News from St. Josephine Bakhita's House

What a fab last couple of months we have had in St. Bakhita's House!



Well done to the following pupils who have won 50 points for their House. This may be due to excellent attendance, exemplary school uniform or a charitable/special deed in school.

Eva McManus 3.4
Anthony Burns 1.4
Ethan Cunningham 1.4
Lucy Wishart 2.4
Joshua McGregor 2.5

Aimee Duggal 1.4
Brodie MacLean 2.4
Chelsea MacDonald 3.4
Carys Sloan 3.4

Sporting Achievements

St. Bakhita's house members have proved themselves to be outstanding in their sport over the last few months.



Niamh Armour, Patrick McElhinney and Orlaith Locke (S3) won First Place, Judges' Choice Award and Grand Champions Award at a cheerleading competition in Manchester.



Ryan Sloan and Chad Duru Inegbenose (S1) were part of St. Conval's Football Team who won the Divisional Cup, with Chad scoring **five** goals in the final!



Congratulations to Sam Parker who competed in the West of Scotland Highland Dance Championships at Gourrock Games, placed 3rd overall, and placed 5th overall in the SDTA Highland Dance Championships in Clydebank.



News from St. Oscar Romero's House

Congratulations

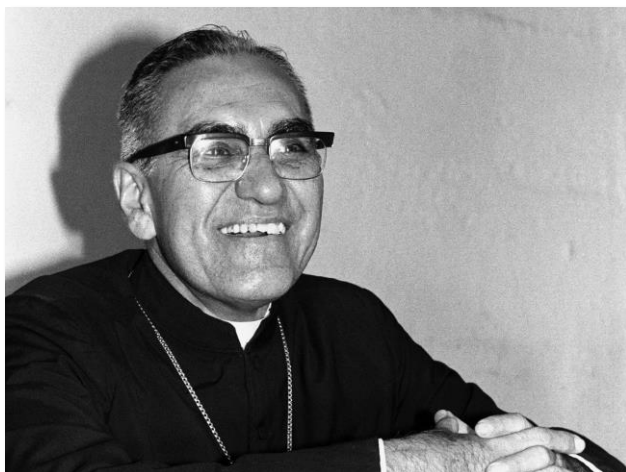
Well done to everyone in St. Oscar Romero's House for their efforts and achievements over the past year! We came very close to a victory in the House Points Challenge, taking second place. We look forward to trying again next session, but are extremely proud of all our hard work that saw us do so well this year.

We are so proud of you

House Captains

Our special thanks go to our House Captains Sophie Chambers and Saoirse Dunn (S3), Emma Irvine and Nikki Lavery (S4) and Casey Griffin and Chloe Chambers (S6). Thank you for your service in representing our House.

We wish Casey and Chloe the best for their futures as they leave St. Benedict's. In their roles as Senior House Captains, Chloe's priority was to work to improve the mental health of young people, and Casey's priority was to encourage younger pupils to achieve their best academically, and contribute to the ethos of the school. We are very grateful for all their hard work in these very important fields.



**"LET US NOT TIRE OF
PREACHING LOVE; IT IS THE
FORCE THAT WILL OVERCOME
THE WORLD."**

ST. OSCAR ROMERO



Pupil Achievements

Huge congratulations to Andrew, Murron, Cara, Katie, Jessica and former pupil Erin who placed **SECOND IN THE WORLD** in their team event at the CRN World Irish Dancing Championships in Killarney!



Junior was presented with a Certificate of Thanks and Recognition from the Provost of Renfrewshire, Cllr. Lorraine Cameron, for his outstanding contribution to the community in the face of adversity during a global pandemic. Junior received this reward for volunteering during the pandemic to help his local community with their gardens. Well done Junior!

Our congratulations and best wishes go with Kacey Watson who has successfully secured a sports scholarship in soccer at the University of Missouri. Kacey has played for a number of Scottish clubs and we're certain she'll enjoy tremendous success Stateside!





Athletics Championships

Well done to all pupils who participated in the School Athletic Championships and to the Sports Development pupils who helped organise this fantastic event!







Developing the Young Workforce

Career Related Activities

On 10th of November 2021, nine S4 pupils took part in the Farrans Construction virtual work experience through 'Speakers for Schools'. As COVID had such an impact on our models and delivery of educational practices, we adapted these to ensure our St. Benedict's young people were still engaging with employers and career ready activities. On completion of this three-day work experience, the pupils involved received their certificates to celebrate their efforts and achievements.



On 14th- 21st of March two St. Benedict's pupils completed work experience with WVB Construction which saw them involved on the Paisley Town Hall project, gaining experience in tasks including brick laying, using specialised equipment and assisting members of the construction greater team.

In March 2022, twenty-five S5 pupils were given the opportunity to work with the Talent Foundry educational charity which created a workshop in conjunction with M&G's investment firm. Pupils were involved in CV workshops, communicating with the Managing Director of the firm, psychometric tests, creating cover letters and working in groups to develop skills such as communication, teamwork and presenting.

Some S4 pupils were then given workshops by the Talent Foundry on financial awareness, budgeting, aptitude tests, pathways into finance and sector awareness. This experience received positive feedback from both facilitator and pupils.



In June 2022 seventeen pupils were taken to DWF law firm where they took part in employability focused workshops. This allowed them to gain insight from the experts and upon completion they were given a mock interview by the lawyers.

Throughout the year pupils have had the opportunity to visit different sectors and workplaces including coffee shops, construction sites, law firms, local farms, mechanics, primary and nursery schools and office environments. We are hoping to resume these opportunities next session.



*Lisa Wiggins
Developing the Young Workforce Coordinator
St. Benedict's High School.*



Digital Learning



We continue to develop our digital learning approaches.

Our main platforms continue to be Satchel One and Microsoft teams. Satchel One provides both yourself and your child with details of homework issued and submission dates.

Microsoft TEAMS is a pupil learning platform - resources linked to their daily lessons and courses are made available to them to access.

Our website has further information and instructions.



Homework

Homework and home study continues to be a crucial part of learning.

As a guide your child should be working for approximately these times per week:

- S1-S3: 5 hours
- S4: 6 hours
- S5/6: 7 hours

Throughout the year there is a supported study programme for senior pupils, and we have recently introduced a weekly lunchtime Homework Club for S1- S3 pupils. Please encourage your child to attend.



Careers Adviser

Skills Development Scotland (SDS)– Careers Adviser

Skills Development Scotland is Scotland's careers service, and their Careers Advisers are available to support you and your child throughout their time at school.

Our SDS Careers Advisers are Audrey McNab and Nicola Ashwood you can get in touch with them through the school or by email: audrey.mcnab@sds.co.uk
nicola.ashwood@sds.co.uk

The Careers Advisers support pupils at key times such as starting S1, making option choices, and preparing for moving on from school.

From the beginning of term, the Careers Advisers have been working 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.

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. The SDS Renfrewshire office is in the Russell Institute, Causeyside Street, Paisley. **To arrange an appointment, telephone 0141 849 0942.**

SDS Exam Results Helpline: www.myworldofwork.co.uk/pupils/results-help

Each year SDS runs an Exam Results Helpline, the helpline reopens in August 2022, and SDS Advisers can help with:

- UCAS Confirmation
- UCAS Clearing
- Giving information on apprenticeships
- Job help
- Giving information on Volunteering
- Staying on at school

Useful websites:

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



My World of Work



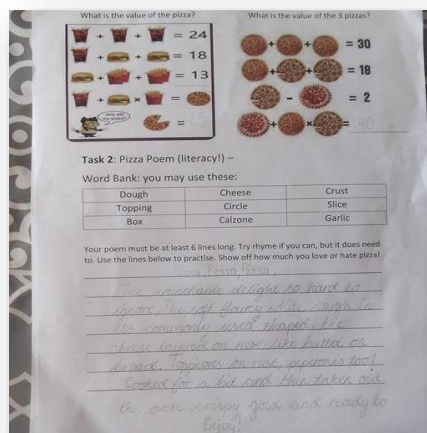
Parents in Partnership

Parental Sessions

This session we engaged with parents in many different ways. One of which was by putting on sessions in our classrooms. The feedback to these sessions has been very positive and we will be running these again next year. This gives parents and pupils even more opportunities to ensure the transition to St. Benedict's is as smooth as possible.

Pizza Packs

In June we ran a competition for all of our S1 pupils, and it was a great success. Pupils were given learning packs and all the ingredients to make their own pizzas at home. Families were to work through it together and then make their pizza before enjoying it for themselves! Families uploaded their photos of their pizzas and worksheets to Microsoft Teams.



Calculators

We work closely with all departments of the school and this year have formed a strong link with the numeracy improvement team. We have decided to give each new S1 pupil this year a scientific calculator that they can keep and this will help them in any subject where they need it!



PIP Booklet

All new pupils will also be issued with our St Benedict's Parents Numeracy, Literacy and Health and Wellbeing Pack. This includes important information on our departments, extra-curricular clubs and provides support in the areas mentioned above. There are also competitions included for families to complete together!

St. Benedict's High School



S1

Numeracy, Literacy, Health and Wellbeing booklet



Parents in Partnership



Science Club

Paper Boat Building Challenge

Science Club had a competition to see who could build the best weight bearing boat. After a trial run, some evaluation, and an explanation of the physics from Mr Kennedy the young scientists made more boats. The young scientist learned about the force that allows boats to float, buoyancy! Using their knowledge of buoyancy each student created their own boat and made sure it could float on water. Once the boats were looking ship shape and seaworthy, we had a competition to see which boat could stay afloat with the most cargo!



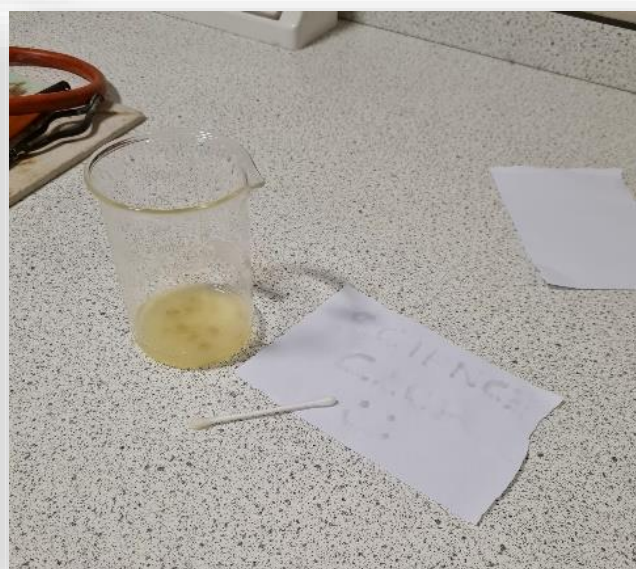
Heart Dissection

Following on from St. Valentine's Day, the young scientists explored what a real heart looks like. They learned the history behind the heart drawing we all know before relating it to the real thing in front of them. Mr Coyle, Mr Irwin, and Mr Kennedy then dissected the hearts showing all the chambers, valves and even the heart strings. The scientists then got involved by identifying the aorta with their hands and even having a go at using a scalpel.



Bottle Rockets and Parachutes

Over three weeks the young scientists looked at some of the forces behind rockets and parachutes. They learned that a parachute increases air resistance and therefor allows an object to fall at a slower pace. They then used this knowledge to attach their parachutes to water rockets which were launched the following week. Using a pump to add air to the bottle increased the pressure inside until all the water was forced out. This created a force greater than the weight of the rocket which allowed it to overcome Earth's gravitational pull, sending the rockets soaring into the sky. Thankfully they all landed safely due to the brilliant parachutes attached to them.



Invisible Ink

The Science Club had a go at writing some secret messages this week using lemons to create invisible ink. When placed on the paper, the water from the lemon juice evaporated to leave behind the citric acid present in the lemon juice. The citric acid reacts with the fibres of the paper, damaging them. As a result of this damage, when put under a Bunsen Burner, these areas of the paper burn much more rapidly than the untreated paper and turn brown, revealing the secret messages written.



Raising Attainment

S4 Attainment Seminar

In February our S4 students participated in their own Raising Attainment Seminar. This, like the one delivered to S5 in November, was designed to support and encourage our students in their preparation for the SQA exams. During this morning Mr Sinclair delivered an inspiring presentation and they participated in a series of workshops designed to increase their study skills, confidence, resilience and aspiration. Workshops included Mindsets, Maximising Potential, Employability and Health & Well-being. This was a very enjoyable and productive experience for everyone involved and our young people have been putting these skills and the knowledge gained into practice during this exam diet.

Supported Study, Easter School and Master Classes

Supported Study classes were offered throughout this session in a number of subjects. In January, in order to further enhance the ongoing excellent learning and teaching which goes on in the classroom, a programme of fully funded tutorial classes was 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. Attendance at these classes was very good and students gave positive feedback on the impact of this support.

In April many of our senior students also attended our Easter School classes where a wide range of subjects were on offer, as well as allowing them to benefit from a quiet, industrious environment for study. On several of the days, lunch was provided which was also very well received.

During the exam diet Master Classes were also being delivered, allowing students the opportunity to work with subject specialists immediately prior to their exam. This support provided pupils with last minute revision, well-being checks and reassurance on the eve of assessment.



S6 Graduation Mass and Awards

This term we were absolutely delighted to host our S6 Graduation Mass for the first time in two years. This was a wonderful celebration of our students' time here at St. Benedict's and allowed us to wish them good luck in their exams and their futures.



Mass was celebrated by Bishop John Keenan, Canon Michael, our school chaplain, as well as our cluster priests Monsignor Denis Carlin and Father Paul.



We also took this opportunity to present awards to a number of students who have achieved highly in recent years. School Dux 2020 were Katie Colligan and Adam Templeton, School Dux 2021 were Abby McLaughlin and Gavin Stewart and S4 Dux 2021 were awarded to Junior Okorodudu and Sarah Hailey.

The Benedictine Award

The Benedictine Award recognises individuals who have overcome adversity and have made a positive contribution to the life of the school. The award was presented to Katie Colligan and Ben Wright, two exceptional students who throughout their time in St. Benedict's modelled our school values and tirelessly served the school community. Both young people excelled academically, gaining a range of excellent qualifications enabling them to pursue their studies at university.

As Head Boy and Girl for Session 2020-21, they led the S6 Leadership Team in a number of initiatives – including supporting and mentoring younger pupils, raising funds for charity in the now infamous Santa Dash and supporting pupils in classes. They have made a tremendous impact on our Catholic ethos both within the school and in the wider community.



The ongoing work to raise attainment in the school has led to very positive outcomes. Analysis of attainment over the past three years suggests an encouraging trend with the figures for leavers obtaining five Higher (or Higher equivalent) awards moving from 32% in 2019 to 44% in 2020 and now 50% in the most recent data. While these figures reflect the hard work of all pupils and staff there is no room for complacency. We are confident that as we move into session 2022-2023, all staff and pupils alike will be determined to build on this success. Here at St Benedict's, we look forward to starting the new session feeling motivated, enthused and driven to reach our full potential.



Literacy

Sky Academy Studios

Recently, a group of S1 pupils attended Sky Academy Studios in Livingston, where they got the opportunity to experience a day in the life of a producer, director, actor, presenter, reporter, scriptwriter, editor, and camera operator! They wrote, filmed, edited, and produced a news report on the effects of cyberbullying and the final result was amazing to watch! Fantastic work everyone!



IDL Digital Software

We have been trialling IDL, a digital programme proven to improve reading and spelling ages, with the aim to improve literacy skills as we work through a phase of COVID-19 recovery. Learners have expressed that they have been enjoying using IDL and can see how it is improving their confidence in reading and writing across the curriculum. As we move into the 22-23 session, we will continue to use IDL to support learners in literacy improvement. IDL can also be accessed from home – if you'd like more information about how to use the software at home, please contact the school office or visit www.idlsgroup.com/literacy.



Reading Schools Award



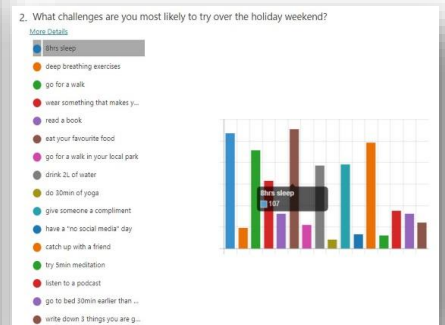
The Literacy Improvement Team is currently seeking ways to build and sustain a reading culture within the school and the wider community. In doing so, we hope to create opportunities for pupils to have their say, as well as create pathways for families and the wider community to become involved. We hope that St. Benedict's will gain accreditation as a Reading School soon – watch this space!



Health and Wellbeing

Throughout the year pupils and staff have been engaging in many experiences to promote positive health and wellbeing across our school. St. Benedict's pressed pause on lessons on the 9th of February across S1-S3 to watch the virtual assembly. The Janitor rang the wellbeing bell at 10.15am and we streamed the assembly across all classrooms, hosted by Emma Willis. After the assembly pupils enjoyed fruit salads donated by Tesco.

Below is a snapshot of some of the activities our pupils have engaged in.



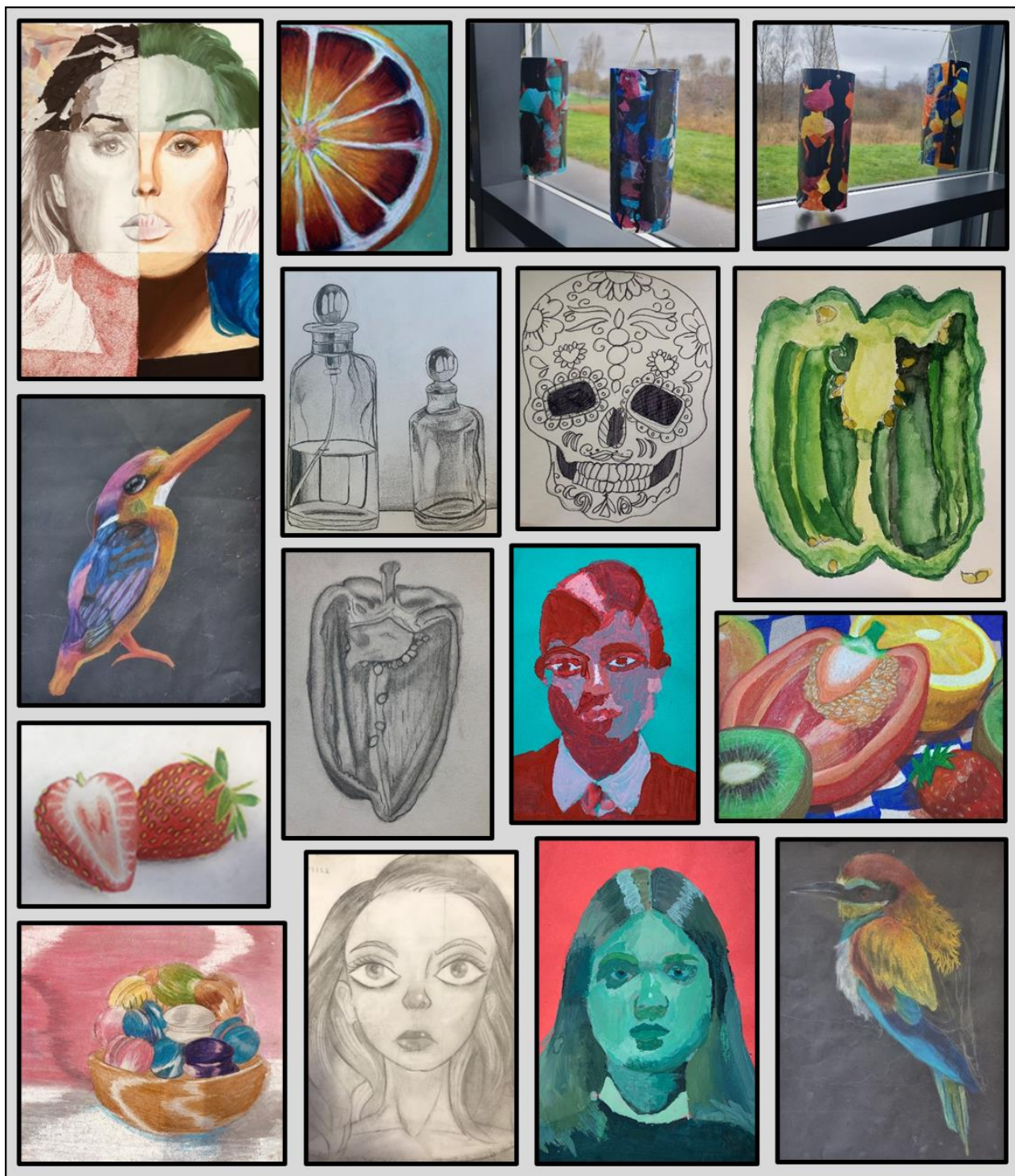
This year our breakfast club was back up and running with help from our local Tesco Linwood store. Pupils have enjoyed a free healthy breakfast every Wednesday and this has provided an opportunity for pupils and staff to get together before lessons start in a relaxed and positive environment.





Art and Design

BGE classes have been working really hard this year and have managed to produce some excellent work. Here are some examples of work from S1-S3.

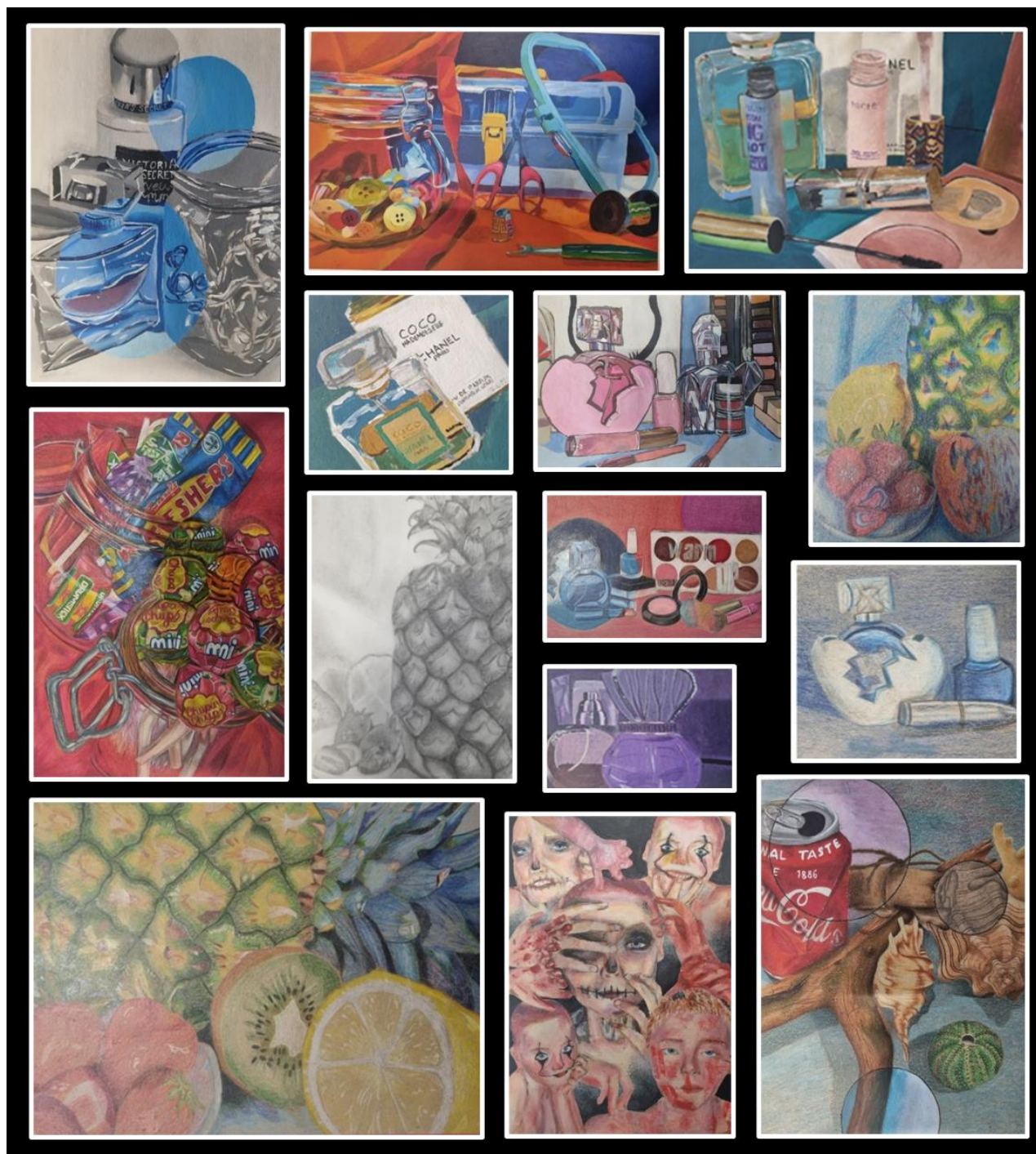


Art Club

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 beautiful work. Well Done everyone. We are looking forward to some fantastic results in August.



@StBenedictsArt



If you haven't already, you can follow the Art Department on Twitter [@StBenedictsArt](https://twitter.com/StBenedictsArt)

This is where we can share some of the amazing work by our talented pupils.

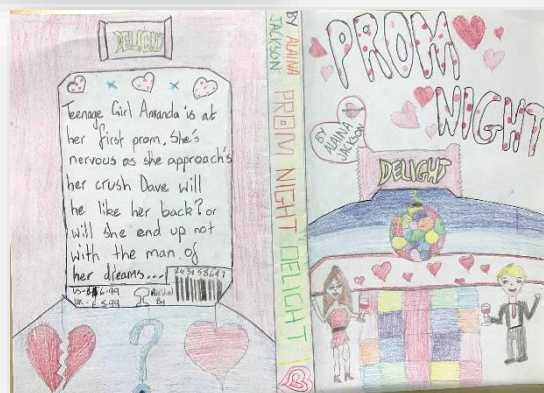
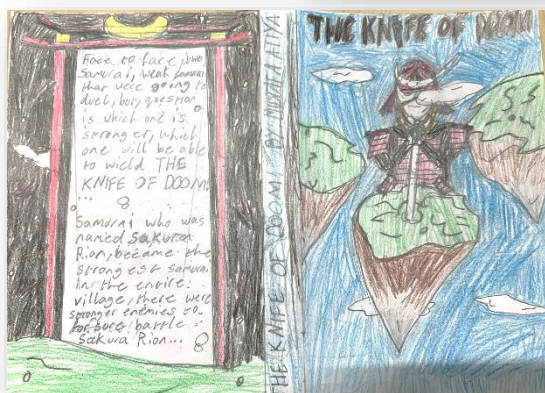
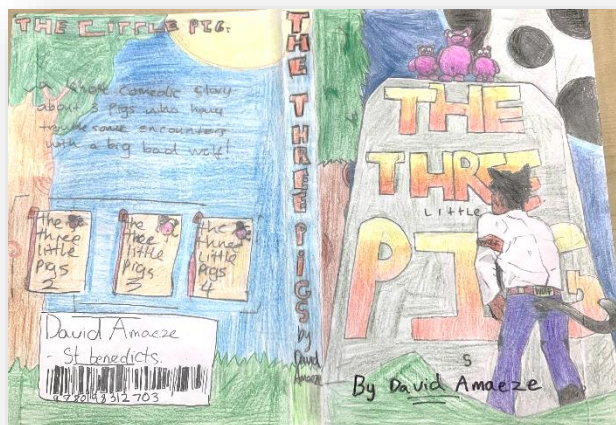
Keep an eye out for our end of year BGE Gallery and SQA Gallery on Twitter.



Language and Communication

S1 Book Cover Competition in Association with St. Benedict's School Library

A huge congratulations to the winners of our S1 Book Cover Competition: David Amaeze, Mustafa Atiya and Alaina Jackson.



All entrants were tasked with creating a book cover appropriate to the genre of their chosen title, including relevant font, pictures, colour scheme, formatting and blurb. Each winner has received a £10 voucher to buy a book (or books) of their own. Congratulations once again!

Thank You And Goodbye



We were very sad to say goodbye to one of our outstanding school librarians at the start of this term. Miss Thompson had only been with us since June 2021 and yet the impact that she had on our school community was both profound and outstanding. Indeed, the World Book Day event, as well as numerous events throughout the year, would not have been possible without her input. We wish Miss Thompson every success – her new school are very lucky to have her!

World Book Day 2022

Staff celebrated World Book Day 2022 by dressing as their favourite characters from books throughout the ages. Many thanks to all who participated in order to make the day one that our pupils will certainly never forget!



Firepit reading at St. Anthony's Primary School

Mr. Taylor was delighted to be invited to attend a fire-pit reading event at St. Anthony's Primary School on 6th May, 2022. As part of the event, a published author attended and read to the younger pupils. However, several of our S1 pupils at St. Benedict's were also invited back to their old primary school to help inspire the younger students with their love of literature.

By all accounts, the event was a great success and we look forward to participating in events which will bring our wider school communities together again in the future. Thank you to Mrs. McBurnie and the St. Anthony's Parent Council for organising.



Modern Languages Primary Liaison

P3 in St. Anthony's were in full swing on Wednesday 11th May learning about "La Oruga Hambrienta" (The Hungry Caterpillar) in Spanish. This was an innovative way to teach fruit, colours and numbers in the target language which the children thoroughly enjoyed and Miss Delaney got the opportunity to join in on the singing and dancing to "El baile de la fruta" which complemented the Spanish story perfectly.



SUCCESS IN SPANISH

The Modern Languages department have revised and refreshed the S3 course in order to give learners greater experience of the skills required at National 5 level and above. This has resulted in an outstanding level of performance in the recent S3 examinations for the subject and the department would therefore like to thank all of our S3 students for putting the time, effort and practice into achieving such success. Keep up the great work and you will be well rewarded for it if you choose to continue as a linguist in S4.



Mathematics

For the first time in three years due to the pandemic, the Maths Department ran the United Kingdom Mathematics Trust (UKMT) Junior Maths Challenge. Pupils all across the UK participate and answer a range of problems that encourages mathematical reasoning, precision of thought, and fluency in using basic mathematical techniques.



The challenge is far from easy and a select number of pupils across the UK get entered into the International Mathematical Olympiad based on performance. There are also awards given to pupils in the top 50% of all UK entries. This year saw a record performance from S1 and S2 pupils. As a school, we achieved 17 awards.



Congratulations to our S1 award winners; Lucas Leckie, Niamh Evans, Amber Moody, Callum Brady, Lucy McElhinney and Julia Armatys.



Congratulations to our S2 award winners; Sean Colligan, Jennifer Gardyne, Corin O'Brien, Aaron Brown, Dannii Cuthill, Megan Brander, Zachary Adams, David Ferris, Charis Wallace, Nieve Brown and Ryan Gallagher.

We look forward to running many more competitions in the next year for all pupils to get involved in. We are very fortunate to have such enthusiastic and hard working pupils who want to achieve their best!



P.E. and H.F.T.

Following the success of Active Girl's Day in Autumn, the Hearty Lives pupils organised and led Active Boys' Day in Spring. This event gave opportunities for all S1/2 boys to participate in various activities to encourage activity in sport. It also presented excellent leadership opportunities for Hearty Lives pupils.

Miss McMillan's Dance team (supported by Chloe Chambers in S6) recently won the Active Schools dance competition competing against other Renfrewshire Schools.



A great day was had by Mrs McCartney's badminton team at the S1/2 Quaich hosted by Active Schools at the Linwood On-X. Well Done to our Quaich team on their first event back since early 2020.

This year we had four boys' football teams who are competing in the Renfrewshire League and Cups; S1, S2, S3/4 and the seniors.



Miss Shearer took the Girls' football team who competed at an authority wide festival organised by Active Schools. They played against eight other Renfrewshire schools and picked up some tough wins along the way.

Miss Shearer's netball team also played several matches against Castlehead and the Glasgow Gaelic School throughout the year.



Furthermore, the Sports Development pupils, in partnership with Lynsey Dawson (Active Schools), attended feeder primaries throughout the year to deliver sports sessions for excellent transition work. They also planned and led an S1 inter-house event sports event.



Four Sports Development pupils were team leaders at the SDS parasport festival. Thank you to Abbie and Jay (Youth Ambassadors) and Hollie and Allie for all of your hard work and dedication.

Miss Shearer organised for S2 to try a taster of the Mental Health & Wellbeing Course, which involved taking part in a quiz and resilience building activities.



Miss McMillan organised and took a Higher Dance trip to the King's Theatre to see Chicago to deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding of the Higher course. She is currently organising another trip to see The Lion King show.

Mr Caldwell and Mrs Mitchell also ran an extra-curricular cooking club for S1/2 pupils throughout the year.



Paul and the coaches at Genki and Clyde Judo clubs delivered judo sessions to S1 and S2 pupils to broaden their experiences of other sports.

Faith in Action

The brutal aggression and large-scale invasion of Ukraine by Russia has seen over 13 million people become refugees or displaced within Ukraine, as well as thousands of civilian casualties. Unfortunately, these numbers continue to grow. The armed violence is causing widespread human suffering, displacement, civilian casualties and damage to civilian infrastructure. SCIAF is responding to this humanitarian crisis as part of Caritas Internationalis, working to provide emergency food, water, safe accommodation, hygiene kits, transport and child support services.



Inspired by God's call to love to our neighbour, R.E. classes in St. Benedict's worked hard during Lent to raise money for [SCIAF's Emergency Ukraine Appeal](#). One notable effort came from Ms. MacNeil's S3 R.E. class, who raised £155 for the appeal with their bake sale. Well done to everyone who got involved in raising funds!

Other World Religions

During the Summer Term, we've been learning about some of the key beliefs, customs, traditions and practices central to other world religions:

- Second Year – Judaism
- Third Year – Islam
- Four Year – Sikhism
- Fifth and Sixth Year – Hinduism

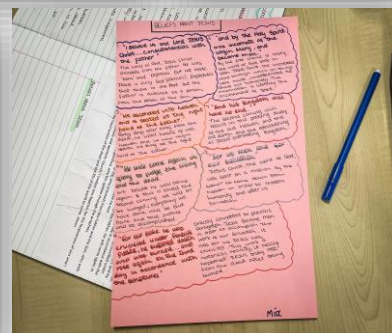
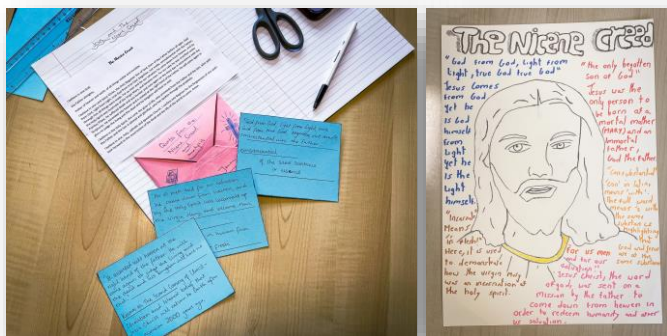
Pupils have enjoyed exploring the ways in which a sense of the sacred affects the everyday lives of people of various faiths. In deepening their understanding they have strengthened their respect for the faith of others.

Higher RMPS

The new Higher RMPS class have been very busy over the past few weeks!

They used the Nicene Creed as a tool to deepen their understanding of Jesus.

Here are some examples of their creativity in their learning!



Well done to Mark, Cody and Junior who won the Annual RMPS Escape Room Challenge!

A Prayer Before a Holiday

We thank you Lord for this year.
For the challenges, the successes, and the mistakes
from which we have learnt.

God of the ordinary, be with us as we spend our time
with family and friends.

Give us strength and courage to do what is right: to be witnesses of our faith.

Help us to be practical Christians these holidays,
to appreciate what others do for us,
to give time and effort to help others.
To be peacemakers in our family.

Keep us safe in our activities;
give us good rest and good fun.
Bring us back refreshed and ready for a new year.

We thank you for our classmates, teachers and school staff,
for our parents, carers and a community that cares for us.
May we always be conscious of you in our lives.

Amen.



Reflections from New Staff

Well – we made it! After a heavily disrupted year at my last school due to COVID restrictions, I was looking forward to a more normal first year at St. Benedict's, and especially in the last few months we have been fortunate enough to make a return to relative normality. This has afforded me the chance to get the full St. Benedict's experience, with Masses, the Prom, Sports Day, fundraising days, staff vs. pupil contests, and so much more that students at this wonderful school get to experience in parallel with their academic learning. It has been so wonderful seeing our amazing pupils engaging so well with these!

I've been fortunate in getting many opportunities to be more involved with the school community outwith my classroom, like helping out with school Masses; being commissioned as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion was an incredibly special moment for me. I was honoured to provide the music for the Graduation Mass this year and to proudly watch our tremendous leavers being justly celebrated. I also had the privilege of taking part in our Primary Transition Programme, and meeting the soon-to-be S1 students has filled me with such excitement for the year ahead.

I am excited to take up my new Guidance Tutor role next year and to assume pastoral responsibility for some students in the school. I can't wait to work with my new classes and to meet a whole new section of the St. Benedict's community. With all restrictions lifted, I look forward to regular school Masses and assemblies, parents' evenings, information evenings, and other avenues for meeting with parents and carers of the superb young people of St. Benedict's. Don't get me started on how excited I am for the return of Numeracy Evenings and Maths Week 2022 - head to the school Twitter to see the kind of wildly enjoyable activities and excruciating maths puns our pupils "love so much" (this may not be a direct quote).

I am so happy with how this first year has gone at St. Benedict's, I could not ask for better staff and pupils to work with, and I am so excited for what next year has to hold. Pupils, be so proud of what you achieved this year and know that your kindness and friendliness make us teachers love our work.



Mr Graham planking for over three minutes on the CANI trip!

What a truly wonderful first year it has been at St. Benedict's! Starting my N.Q.T. year in August, I didn't quite know what to expect, and June seemed so far away. I have been welcomed into the school community by staff, pupils and parents alike, and I am delighted that I have secured a permanent post and can return at the beginning of the new term.

I was fortunate to have a number of chances to meet with our new S1 pupils, through the Primary Transition Days, Induction Days and the Parents' Information Evening. I hope that they're all as excited to start as we are to welcome them. We also said goodbye to our fantastic S6 pupils. Although I didn't teach S6 this year, I had many opportunities to work with them, through UCAS applications, school Masses and the Yearbook Committee. I'm delighted to hear of all their future plans and loved celebrating with them at Prom!



Mrs Macdonald and Mr Graham

As well as teaching Religious Education to our S1 to S5, I am thrilled to be running the Leadership Award next year. We've had an excellent few introductory weeks so far, and I look forward to continuing in our success in August. The Leadership Award is new to St. Benedict's, and I feel it will play a positive role in forming our young people to achieve their future ambitions, building their confidence in working with others.

We have been very fortunate over the past few months to return to a sense of normality. I am quickly learning of all the usual events that take place in St. Benedict's and was delighted to have been able to contribute to our end of term Mass. I am looking forward to experiencing more of the extra-curricular opportunities next year, getting to know our pupils even better.

I hope you all have a chance to relax, recharge and experience things that bring you joy during the summer break! I'm counting down the days to go visit my sister in America and am hopeful that this beautiful weather continues when I return.

Have a fantastic summer!

Mrs Macdonald, Religious Education



Science

First Year pupils spent time planning an experiment to investigate the effect of either temperature or solvent on the rate of diffusion.



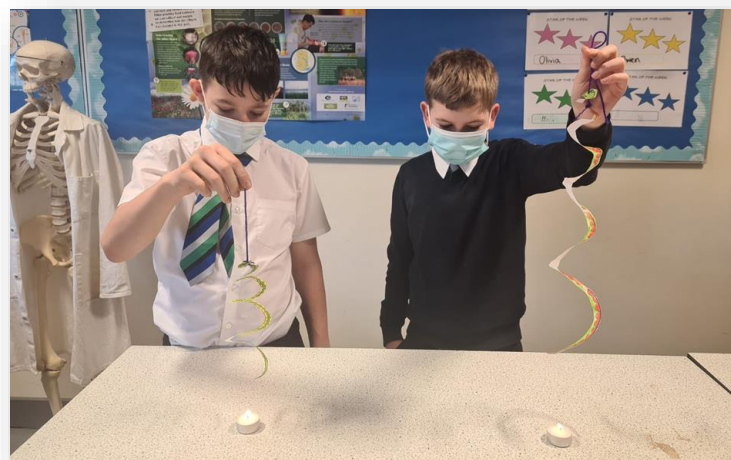
Second Year pupils spent time designing and building rockets in preparation for launch.



Higher Physics revising the quark composition of Baryons and Mesons using M&Ms.



First Year scientists have also been exploring convection currents this term.



Our biologists investigated the use of yeast in bread making.

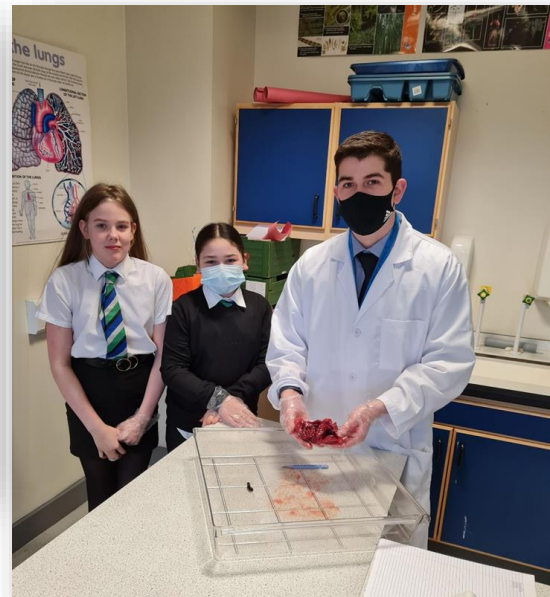




First Year spent time researching climate change during reflections on the COP26 summit.



Our BGE pupils also got their hands dirty this term setting pitfall traps in the grounds of St. Benedict's and dissecting a heart.



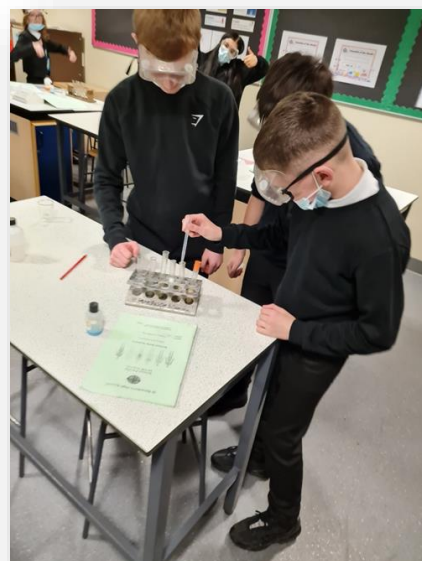
First Year used microscopes to view the cells of a red onion. We increased the magnification and all managed to identify the nucleus in some cells.



Second Years used biuret and ethanol as indicators to investigate the protein and lipid content of 'unknown' food samples. We linked this to our understanding of the role of the small intestine in digestion.



BGE Science pupils are preparing for their visit to the Newton Flight Academy at the Science Centre.



A selection of the Scientist of The Month Winners from this year.

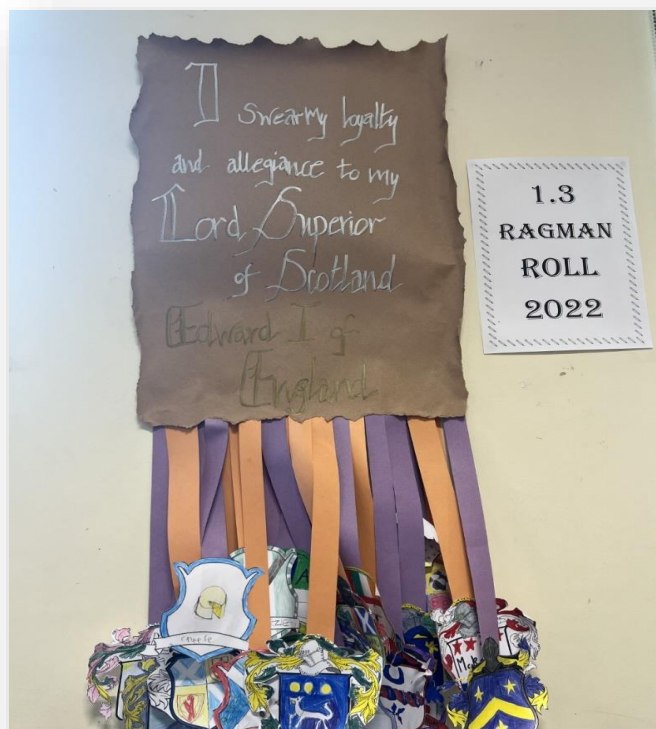
S2 Dynamic Earth Trip

In February this year, our S2 pupils enjoyed an amazing trip to the Dynamic Earth. We took a 4D adventure to explore the earth forces that shaped our planet as we know it today. We then visited the planetarium to watch the 360 story of the Apollo space programme, one of humankind's greatest achievements!



Pupil Voice and Pupil Work

Pupil voice has been sampled throughout the year and we have displayed their thoughts and opinions. We use them to help us shape our curriculum and teaching. Pupils have been working very hard to produce high quality work. Pupils have opportunities to work independently, in pairs and in groups to help them achieve success.



S3 Loch Lomond Trip

Our S3 pupils are looking forward to our trip to Loch Lomond in June. To coincide with our glaciation topic, we will be visiting the National Park to explore evidence of glaciation and how the landscape has been influenced by various human activities. We will firstly visit the Balmaha visitor centre where pupils will conduct a tourist questionnaire and environmental survey. We will then venture up Conic Hill which offers truly fantastic views over Loch Lomond and its many islands.

History Sources

Pupils in S1 History have been bringing in items to take part in a source-based show and tell. They have been listening to Dusty Springfield on a vintage record player. Some other items brought into class included model trains, family trees, a vintage vinyl collection and pictures of medals.



S3 Modern Studies

Pupils studied the role of the police as part of their Crime and the Law unit of work.

To assist them in their studies, PC Elliott kindly visited our class to explain the role of the police in person.

All pupils found the experience highly interesting and valuable!



[@socsubsstbens](https://twitter.com/socsubsstbens)

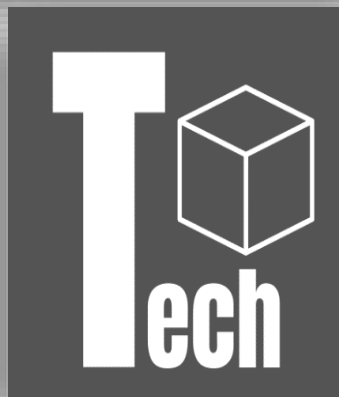
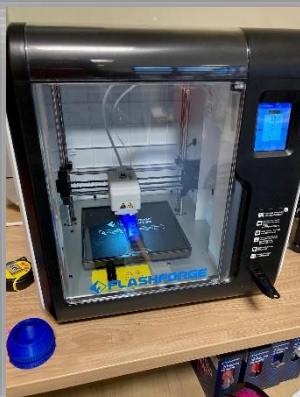
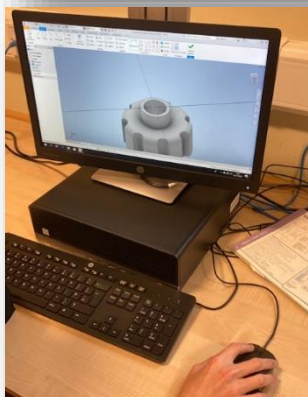
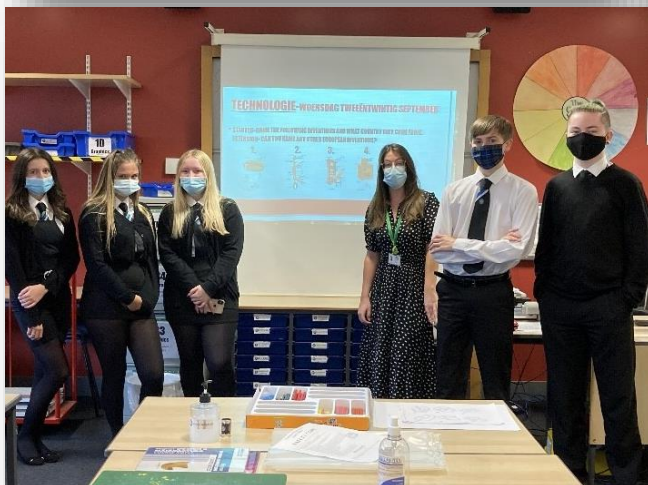
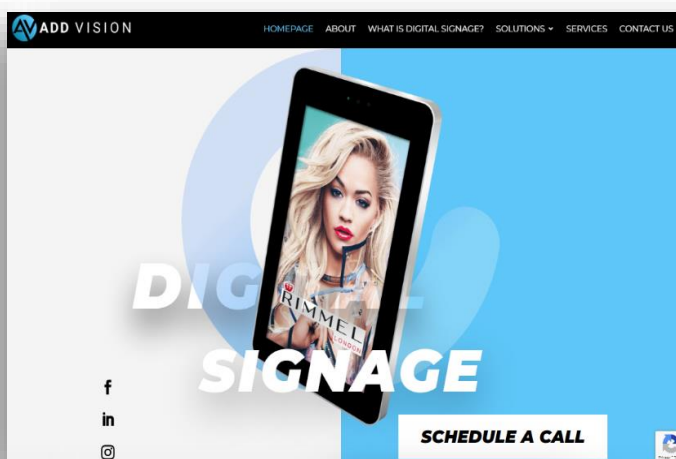


Technical

This session we have been working hard to engage with the world of work and give our pupils an experience of how our subjects fit into the “world of work”.

We have built a partnership with a local graphic design business. Our S3-5 Graphics pupils engaged in a fantastic workshop from ADD VISION a forward-thinking Digital Signage local company. They specialise in providing complete Digital Signage solutions.

Next session we will be partnering up with ADD VISION to run a project that pupils get to design for real life projects and get input from graphic design professionals.





Parent Council

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.**

Members

Stephen McGee (Chairperson), Clare Turley (Vice Chairperson), Alan Taylor (Head Teacher), Nicola Stewart, Elizabeth McNally, Julie Hunter, Claire McLaren, Canon Michael McMahon, Anne Shaw, Tracie McGee, Nicola Cunningham, Gillian Miller, Kayleigh Dyer. Staff Representatives – Claire Howell, Colette McArthur.

Despite the difficult times our group has continued to meet both in person and online. Meetings take place on a Monday starting at 6pm. Meeting dates will be available on our twitter feed shortly.

If you would like **to join or have any points you would like raised please contact me** stmcgee@sky.com or the school office.

Kind regards Stephen McGee



Follow the Parent Council on Twitter
[@StBenedictPC](https://twitter.com/StBenedictPC)



Attendance and 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 standards we expect, we have a duty of care to inform you and to follow Renfrewshire Council procedures.



Pupil Reports and Target Setting

Monitoring and tracking of your child's progress helps us to ensure your child can achieve their potential and is therefore a very important part of his/her education.

As part of our monitoring and tracking system, your child will be involved in regular discussions with staff to identify strengths, areas for development and next steps. Please also discuss these reports with your child.

Over the course of a full session, you will receive the following communication.

The school calendar on the website highlights the dates these are issued.

1. A full written report detailing your child's strengths and areas for development within each subject of study.
2. Tracking reports detailing levels of achievement and ratings for effort, behaviour and homework.
3. A parent-teacher meeting with an opportunity for a verbal report.

If you have any issues you wish to discuss further, please contact your child's pastoral care teacher or year group Depute Head Teacher.



We are a nut-free school!

We are a nut-free school as some members of our school community have a **life-threatening allergy to nuts**.

Nuts and products containing nuts e.g. Nutella, Snickers Bars etc. should not be brought into school.

It is essential that these members of our school community are not in contact with anyone who has eaten nuts that day as this can also trigger a reaction.

To ensure the safety of all members of our school community, it is imperative that this ban on nuts and nut-containing products is adhered to.

Thank you for your continued support in this matter.





St. Benedict's Website and Twitter

I draw your attention to our school's website <http://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 1800 followers - you can follow us on [@stbenedictsren](https://twitter.com/stbenedictsren)





Dates for Your Diary

First Term	Date
In-service days (teachers only)	Friday 12 August and Monday 15 August 2022
Pupils' first day	Tuesday 16 August 2022
Local holidays (schools closed)	Friday 23 September and Monday 26 September 2022
Pupils return	Tuesday 27 September 2022
Mid-term holidays (schools closed)	Monday 17 October to Friday 21 October 2022
In-service day (teachers only)	Monday 24 October 2022
Pupils return	Tuesday 25 October 2022
St. Andrew's Day (schools closed)	Wednesday 30 November 2022
Pupils return	Thursday 1 December 2022
Christmas holidays (schools closed)	Thursday 22 December 2022 to Wednesday 4 January 2023





Feedback

We welcome any feedback on the content of the Winter 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:

stbenedictshighenquiries@renfrewshire.gov.uk

Pupil's name:

Year group:

Comment:

Signature of parent/carer:

Name of parent/carer (please print):